NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY: THE DECLINE OF INTERDICTION EFFORTS IN THE CARIBBEAN

104 Y 4.G 74/7:P 75/7

National Drug Control Policy: The D...

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

MAY 23, 1996

Printed for the use of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight

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NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY: THE DECLINE OF INTERDICTION EFFORTS IN THE CARIBBEAN

THURSDAY, MAY 23, 1996

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY,
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE,
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:40 a.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. William H. Zeliff (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Representatives Zeliff, Ehrlich, Ros-Lehtinen, Souder, Thurman, Slaughter, and Cummings.

Staff present: Robert B. Charles, staff director and chief counsel; Robert J. Shea and Sean Littlefield, professional staff members; Sally Dionne, clerk; and Cherri Branson and Dan Hernandez, minority professional staff members.

Mr. ZELIFF. Good morning. The Subcommittee on National Security, International Affairs, and Criminal Justice hearing on our Nation's drug war will come to order.

I want to thank you all for coming. We will have additional Members that will be joining us here shortly, but in the interest of time we wanted to move forward. This is the second in a series of hearings to examine the President's national drug control strategy.

Today, we are focusing on the national security threat posed by rising maritime drug trafficking in the Caribbean transit zone, and the dramatic decline in Federal resources requested by the President and devoted to drug interdiction between 1993 and 1996.

We are privileged to have with us today Adm. Robert Kramek, who has done outstanding work as the President's Interdiction Coordinator and as Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard. Admiral Kramek has been a tremendous leader in the drug war. His efforts have been widely appreciated in Congress, and he is held in the highest respect by this subcommittee.

We are also pleased today to be releasing a new GAO report entitled, "U.S. Interdiction Efforts in the Caribbean Decline," and to have those investigators with us for testimony.

Finally, we are very pleased to have with us several hands-on witnesses direct from the transit zone. Our third panel consists of the commanding officers of two Coast Guard cutters, and the aircraft commander and pilot of an HU–25 Falcon interceptor, and the

aircraft commander and pilot of an HH–60 Jayhawk interdiction helicopter.

I might say that members of the subcommittee were fortunate to be in the transit zone 6 or 7 months ago and had a chance to review firsthand these assets.

The alarming increase in juvenile drug use and juvenile crime over the past 3 years reverses a decade of falling drug use. Most of those in this room already know how stark those trend lines are. But paralleling this increase in drug use by kids has been another phenomenon.

According to sources as diverse as the University of Michigan's Monitoring the Future Study, the National PRIDE Survey, the National Household Survey, data from the Drug Enforcement Administration and local police reports, something else is happening. The overall availability of drugs has increased dramatically, and with the increase in availability has come falling prices and increasing purities.

The effects of increased supply are undeniable. Over the last 2 years, all-time records have been set for heroin and cocaine-related emergency room incidents. The annual DAWN data provide clear and convincing evidence to this effect.

Prices for crack and heroin have fallen, making these addictive poisons more affordable to kids than ever before. Even marijuana or THC-related emergency room incidents rose by 39 percent last year, with increasing reports of marijuana that is between 4 and 25 times more potent than what existed in the 1960's and, now often laced with PCP or cocaine.

Joe Califano, Jimmy Carter's former head of HEW and now the head of Columbia University's Center on Substance Abuse recently warned that the increases in casual use are turning into significantly higher addiction numbers among kids. That's new. And it's an alarm bell.

As the Administrator of the DEA said, this is a time bomb ticking away getting ready to go off. And it is what brings us here to discuss the interdiction effort today.

Believe it or not, this Nation is, for all intents and purposes, under siege. Roughly 780 metric tons of cocaine are being produced in South America annually, and about 400 tons of that makes it into the United States, ending up in our schools and communities. Roughly 30 percent of that total comes into the United States through the Caribbean, increasingly by way of Puerto Rico.

Moreover, while the Coast Guard and other Federal agencies have done exceptional work with the resources they have been given, maritime drug trafficking in the Caribbean has seriously increased since 1992. Moreover, the proportion of apprehensions, relative to total events, has fallen.

By way of example, the latest GAO study shows that in 1993 there were 174 maritime events or confirmed drug shipments. By 1995, that number had shot up to 259 events, a 67-percent increase.

Moreover, in the same period, the number of apprehensions, due in large measure to inadequate resources, crept up only slightly from 122 to 135.

In other words, as the number of events that could be acted upon rose by 85, the number of apprehensions achieved rose by only 10. Put another way, the lack of sufficient intelligence, tracking, and apprehending assets available to block increasing maritime traffic led to a proportional decrease in apprehensions over the same period.

The GAO report being released today and the testimony we will hear from GAO show that the Caribbean drug traffickers are getting more sophisticated, and it will also show one pivotal additional fact, and I quote the report: "Funding from drug interdiction declined from about $1 billion in fiscal year 1992 to $569 million in fiscal 1995." That is a shocking drop, in the face of what the President should clearly recognize as a rising national security threat, led by rising maritime drug trafficking.

Ironically, in the President's fiscal 1997 budget, he has asked for a slight increase in funding for interdiction over last year's number, but that request still comes in almost $100 million below the 1992 level of drug interdiction funding.

Moreover, much of the money that was supposed to be spent on drug interdiction over the past 3 years, fully $45 million, got reprogrammed to Haiti. Putting aside discussion of that decision, it should be obvious that counternarcotics efforts in the transit zone cannot remain at the bottom of the barrel.

That is one reason that we have already asked the President to come back with new interdiction and source country funding levels, and to reconsider the rather anemic requests that have been presented for fiscal 1997. The threat is real and growing, and it cannot be ignored.

While we support the President's choice of four-star general, Barry McCaffery, as our Nation's new drug czar, we have yet to see this President make this a top issue and we are very concerned about that. Supporting this effort has a direct effect on our Nation's future, and the President's disinterest in this vital policy area has become not only a major embarrassment, it has become a threat to America's youth. Today, we hope to focus on the art of the possible, and understand these numbers and needs better.

If John F. Kennedy in 1960 can declare we can put a man on the Moon, we can certainly win the war on drugs. I hope we can do this now rather than later. It is a top priority and we need to totally commit to it.

With that I welcome our witnesses and turn the floor over to our good friend and ranking member, Karen Thurman of Florida.

Mrs. THURMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I, too, welcome the witnesses today. As members of the subcommittee know, an effective antidrug strategy depends on prevention, treatment, prosecution, interdiction, and eradication programs. Putting too much emphasis on one at the expense of the others will not necessarily resolve the problem.

Along with many Members, I want to learn about the actions or inactions of Caribbean countries in resisting traffickers. I, therefore, am concerned that our witnesses do not include the ONDCP itself and officials from the State Department, which produced the 1996 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report.

The Customs Service, which is conducting Operation Gateway in Puerto Rico and so much of what we will hear today relies on information that is contained in this report, and the State could provide information on international and foreign policy issues in the transit countries.

In addition, General McCaffrey could advise the subcommittee on what action it is taking to implement GAO's recommendations and he could explain again the 1996 strategy. I am also very interested in hearing GAO's testimony. I found its report very interesting and yet somewhat disturbing in that GAO now seems to have reversed its conclusions of 1993 and 1994.

Our witnesses have a tremendous responsibility to this subcommittee and to the American public, and I equally await this testimony and the answers to our questions. We welcome you today. Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you. We obviously have additional hearings to address some of your concerns and we have been working very closely with General McCaffrey as well.

Now, on our first panel we have Mr. Jess Ford, an Associate Director in the International Relations and Trade Group in the National Security and International Affairs Division of the General Accounting Office. I understand you worked very hard on this report and we look forward to hearing from you. Will both of you be testifying?

Mr. FORD. I will be the main spokesman, but if you have questions he can answer.

Mr. ZELIFF. If both of you will be testifying, I would like to swear both of you in. Please raise your right hand.

[Witnesses sworn.]

Mr. ZELIFF. If you would be willing to summarize your testimony within approximately 5 minutes or so, and then we will be happy to submit the balance of the testimony in writing for the record.

STATEMENT OF JESS FORD, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND TRADE ISSUES, U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE, ACCOMPANIED BY LOUIS ZANARDI, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

Mr. FORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the subcommittee. I am pleased to be here this morning to discuss our recently issued report on U.S. interdiction efforts in the Caribbean transit zone. We focused our review on four major issues that the GAO looked into. These included the nature of the drug trafficking activities in the Caribbean transit zone, host nation impediments to an effective regional strategy to interdict drugs; the capabilities of United States agencies to interdict drug trafficking activities, and Federal agency planning and coordination efforts to implement interdiction. I am going to briefly talk about all four of those issues in my summary.

According to the best estimates from law enforcement officials, approximately 30 percent of cocaine comes through the Caribbean area and enters the United States. United States drug officials believe that since 1993, traffickers have moved some of their activities from the Bahamas to Puerto Rico, because United States interdiction of efforts in the Bahamas increased the risk to traffickers.

United States law enforcement officials have mixed opinions concerning whether drug trafficking activities are increasing throughout the other islands in the eastern Caribbean and the southern United States. However, several U.S. law enforcement officials have indicated to us that cocaine smuggling and activities are increasing in southern Florida.

The second issue related to the threat has to do with the shift from air to maritime threat. According to DOD records, the number of known drug trafficking aircraft events in the transit zone has declined approximately 65 percent from 1992 to 1995. During the same timeframe known maritime events increased approximately 40 percent.

U.S. enforcement officials told us that drug traffickers are increasingly relying on noncommercial and commercial maritime vessels such as go-fast boats, sailing and fishing vessels, and containerized cargo ships to transport drugs. According to these officials, the large number of noncommercial vessels traveling the transit zone makes it difficult to detect and intercept many drug trafficking activities.

In addition, interdiction efforts are hampered by increasing use of technology by drug traffickers to avoid detection such as the global positioning system and cellular equipment.

The second major area covered in our report discusses host nation impediments that hinder counternarcotics efforts. According to State Department, United States law enforcement officials in most Caribbean nations are cooperating in the fight against drug trafficking. However, they indicated that most Caribbean nations lack the resources and law enforcement capabilities and have some corruption problems which hamper their efforts to combat drug traffickers.

According to the State Department, the governments of many of the Caribbean nations are unable to finance their law enforcement operations at a level commensurate with the trafficker threat. U.S. officials are trying to improve interdiction efforts by signing agreements which allow U.S. personnel to conduct antidrug, sea, and air operations within the territorial waters and airspace of these nations.

U.S. agencies are also providing limited supplies and training to police forces in judicial institutions. The third area covered in our report discusses U.S. efforts—shows that U.S. efforts in the transit zone have declined. Since 1992, U.S. capabilities to interdict drug trafficking activities in the transit zone have declined approximately 43 percent from $1 billion in 1992 to approximately $569 million in 1995.

Various agencies stress to us decisions to reduce funding devoted to drug interdiction were often beyond their control. For example, the U.S. Coast Guard noted that during the early 1990's and 1994 assets were reallocated to covering other missions including the two mass exoduses of immigrants from Haiti and Cuba.

In 1992, the President issued a directive calling for a gradual shift in emphasis of funding from the transit zone to the source countries. Based on the data in our report, we showed that there was no corresponding shift in funding to the source countries during this timeframe.

We found that overall operations to interdict drugs in the Caribbean part of the transit zone have also declined. According to information we were able to obtain, radar coverage, ship days and flight hours have declined since their levels of 1992. And we have an appendix 3 of my statement, which depicts an illustration of lost radar surveillance capabilities and also has some information on maritime asset usage from 1991 to 1995.

Cocaine seizures have declined from the peaks of 1991 and 1992 from approximately 70,000 kilograms during that timeframe to 37,000 in 1995. The decline in recorded seizures is likely due to a combination of factors, including the reduced capability of U.S. agencies to detect air activities and a shift from air to maritime trafficking, limited host nation law enforcement capabilities, and cocaine traffickers' increased smuggling sophistication.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, in our report we call for the Office of the National Drug Control Policy to establish a regional action plan focusing on the Caribbean. Our recommendation was accepted by the drug czar's office. However, at this point we are not sure exactly how that is going to be implemented.

This concludes my prepared remarks. I would be happy to respond to any questions the committee may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ford follows:]

Statement of Jess T. Ford, Associate Director, International Relations and Trade Issues, National Security and International Affairs Division

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee

I am pleased to be here today to discuss the results of our review of U.S. interdiction efforts in the Caribbean. Our review focused on (1) the nature of drug trafficking activities in the Caribbean transit zone;[1] (2) host nation impediments to an effective regional strategy; (3) the capabilities of U.S. agencies to interdict drug trafficking activities; and (4) federal agency planning, coordination, and implementation of U.S. interdiction efforts. We recently issued a report to this subcommittee on our findings.[2] Our report on U.S. drug control efforts in the other major transit zone country, Mexico, should be available in the middle of June.

I would like to provide a short overview and then talk about each of these issues in a little more detail.

RESULTS IN BRIEF

With approximately 30 percent of the cocaine entering the United States coming through the Caribbean transit zone, cocaine trafficking is a major threat to the United States. During the past several years, Caribbean traffickers have shifted their operations from

[1]The transit zone is the 2-million square mile area between the U.S. and South American borders and covers the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico, Central America, Mexico, and the Eastern Pacific. Our review concentrated on the Caribbean portion of the transit zone to include the leeward islands, the windward islands, the Bahamas, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

[2]Drug Control: U.S. Interdiction Efforts in the Caribbean Decline (GAO/NSIAD-96-119, April 17, 1996).

primarily air-related activities to maritime activities. Furthermore, traffickers are using improved technologies, such as global positioning systems, to counter efforts by U.S. agencies to identify and monitor their activities.

In November 1993, the President issued a counternarcotics strategy for cocaine in the Western Hemisphere. The strategy called for a shift in emphasis from the transit zone to the source countries. A major part of the U.S. strategy in the Caribbean is to strengthen the host nations' capabilities to support U.S. international counternarcotics objectives. The State Department has made some progress in implementing the strategy through new agreements with Caribbean countries and islands that promote increased air and maritime cooperation. However, U.S. officials generally believe that a number of host nations lack the capabilities needed to conduct effective antidrug operations and are also inhibited by corruption.

Budget reductions for interdiction efforts in the entire transit zone have reduced the ability of the Department of Defense (DOD) and law enforcement agencies to identify, track, and intercept drug traffickers. Funding for drug interdiction declined from about $1 billion in fiscal year 1992 to $569 million in fiscal year 1995. DOD's budget reductions resulted in fewer ship days, flight hours, and ground-based radars devoted to drug interdiction. Although a reduction in the interdiction effort was envisioned in the new cocaine strategy, the strategy also anticipated source country funding increases that never

materialized. Cocaine seizures in the transit zone declined from a peak of about 70,000 kilograms in 1992 to about 37,000 kilograms in 1995.

The executive branch had not (1) developed a regional action plan to implement the cocaine strategy in the transit zone, (2) fully staffed interagency organizations with key roles in the interdiction program, or (3) fully resolved issues on intelligence sharing.

DRUG TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES ARE CHANGING, AND INTERDICTION IS BECOMING MORE DIFFICULT

Puerto Rico has become a major entry point for cocaine moving through the Eastern Caribbean into the United States. U.S. drug officials believe that after 1993 traffickers moved some of their activities from the Bahamas to Puerto Rico because U.S. interdiction efforts in the Bahamas had increased the risk to traffickers. U.S. law enforcement officials have mixed opinions concerning whether drug trafficking activities are increasing throughout other islands in the Eastern Caribbean and into the southern United States. However, several U.S. law enforcement officials stated that cocaine smuggling activities are increasing in southern Florida.

DOD records showed that while the number of known drug trafficking aircraft events[3] in the transit zone declined by 65 percent from 344 in 1992 to 125 in 1995, the number of

[3]According to DOD, "known events" represent clear, firm information about a drug shipment, confirmed delivery, aborted mission, or apprehension.

known maritime events increased by 40 percent from 174 in 1993 to 249 in 1995. (See Appendix I). Drug enforcement officials told us that drug traffickers are increasingly relying on noncommercial and commercial maritime vessels (such as go-fast boats, sailing and fishing vessels, and containerized cargo ships) to transport drugs. According to U.S. officials, the large number of noncommercial vessels traveling in the transit zone makes it difficult to detect or intercept many drug trafficking activities. In addition, interdiction efforts are hampered by the increasing use of technology by drug traffickers to avoid detection such as global positioning systems and cellular equipment.

HOST NATION IMPEDIMENTS HINDER COUNTERNARCOTICS EFFORTS

According to the State Department and U.S. law enforcement officials, most Caribbean host nations are cooperating in fighting drug trafficking. However, most Caribbean nations lack resources and law enforcement capabilities and have some corruption problems that hamper their efforts to combat drug trafficking. The Department of State's March 1996 International Narcotics Control Strategy Report provides a detailed discussion on the Caribbean countries. The report concluded that cooperation with U.S. authorities was generally excellent in 1995. However, the report noted that the governments of many Caribbean countries were unable to finance their law enforcement operations at a level commensurate with the trafficker threat.

U.S. officials stated that Caribbean nations will always have limited capabilities because they have small populations and limited funds available for counternarcotics. As a result,

U.S. officials are trying to improve interdiction capabilities by signing agreements that allow U.S. personnel to conduct antidrug sea and air operations within the territorial waters and airspace of these nations. U.S. agencies are also providing limited supplies and training to the police forces and the judicial institutions.

CAPABILITIES TO INTERDICT DRUG TRAFFICKERS IN THE TRANSIT ZONE HAVE BEEN REDUCED

Since 1992, U.S. capabilities to interdict drug trafficking activities in the transit zone have declined. From fiscal years 1992 to 1995, the budgets for most federal agencies in the transit zone declined significantly. The amount of U.S. interdiction funding devoted to the transit zone declined by about 43 percent, from $1 billion in fiscal year 1992 to $569 million in fiscal year 1995. In November 1993, a presidential directive called for a gradual shift in emphasis from the transit zone to the source countries. Various agencies stressed that decisions to reduce the funding devoted to drug interdiction were often beyond their control. For example, the U.S. Coast Guard noted that, during the early 1990s, assets were reallocated from counterdrug missions to respond to two mass exoduses of emigrants from Haiti and Cuba.

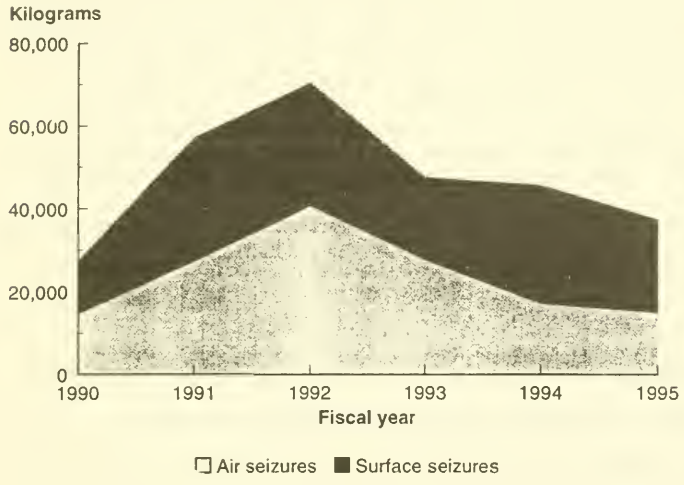
Moreover, the anticipated shift to the source countries did not materialize. Counternarcotics funding in the source countries declined from fiscal year 1993 to lower levels in fiscal years 1994 and 1995. (See Appendix II.)

Agency officials also reported reductions in operational capabilities. Between December 1994 and November 1995, the DOD deactivated three Bahamian Aerostat radars, two Caribbean Basin Radar Network sites, two mobile tactical radars, and two remote high-frequency Link 11 transmitter/receivers. DOD offset these lost radars with two Relocatable Over the Horizon Radar systems which provide a larger area of coverage than the radars they replaced. However, the systems are less effective in detecting and monitoring air events. In addition, reductions in the number of ship days devoted to drug interdiction fell from about 4,400 in fiscal year 1993 to about 2,800 in fiscal year 1995. (See Appendix III.) DOD also reported reductions in use of AWACS aircraft.

COCAINE SEIZURES HAVE
DECLINED FROM 1991-92 LEVELS

Cocaine seizures in the entire transit zone have declined from the 1991-92 levels. As shown in figure 1, the amount of cocaine seized declined by about 47 percent, from about 70,000 kilograms to 37,000 kilograms between fiscal years 1992 and 1995.

Figure 1: Cocaine Seizures (Fiscal Years 1991-95)



Air seizures accounted for the greatest amount of decline, from about 40,000 kilograms in fiscal year 1992 to only 14,500 kilograms in fiscal year 1995. The decline in recorded seizures is likely due to a combination of factors, including reduced capability of U.S.

agencies to detect air activities and a shift from air to maritime trafficking, limited host nation law enforcement capabilities, and cocaine traffickers' increased smuggling sophistication.

LACK OF REGIONAL PLAN HAMPERS INTERDICTION EFFORT

We found that the executive branch had not developed a plan to implement the U.S. antidrug strategy in the Caribbean. DOD, the State Department, and law enforcement agencies have various agreements to implement the national drug strategy in the region. However, counternarcotics officials expressed concern over the lack of overall responsibility for implementing the current cocaine strategy in the Caribbean. U.S. officials noted that neither the Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) nor the U.S. Interdiction Coordinator had the authority to command the use of any agency's operations resources.

Various U.S. officials noted that there is a need for leadership and commitment by the ONDCP to ensure that agencies are carrying out their missions to achieve U.S. counternarcotics objectives. We also found that interagency staffing responses were inadequate, and that intelligence sharing remains a contentious issue. For example, we noted staffing shortfalls at both Joint Interagency Task Force-East, located in Key West, Florida, and the U.S. Interdiction Coordinator.

In our report, we recommended that the Director of ONDCP develop a regional action plan focused on the Caribbean part of the transit zone to fully implement the U.S. policy for cocaine in the Western Hemisphere. We stated that, at a minimum, the plan should determine resources and staffing needed and delineate a comprehensive strategy to improve host nation capabilities and commitment to counternarcotics interdiction. ONDCP stated that the recommendation was sound and was carefully examining our recommendation in preparing the 1996 National Drug Control Strategy.

- - - - - - - -

This concludes my prepared remarks. I would be happy to respond to any questions.

AIR AND MARITIME DRUG TRAFFICKING EVENTS AND RESULTS (1992-1995)

	Air		Maritime	
Year	Events	Results	Events	Results
1992	344	66	[a]	[a]
1993	217	71	174	122
1994	154	45	223	172
1995	125	26	249	135

[a]Maritime data for 1992 are not available.

Note: Traffickers' aborts were not counted in results.

Source: DOD.

COUNTERNARCOTICS FUNDING IN THE TRANSIT ZONE
(FISCAL YEARS 1991-1995)

Dollars in millions

Agency	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
DOD	$407.1	$504.5	$426.0	$220.4	$214.7
Coast Guard	565.2	443.9	310.5	314.4	301.2
Customs	[a]	[a]	16.2	12.5	12.8
DEA	26.2	28.8	29.1	28.7	29.6
State	35.9	36.2	14.0	7.9	10.6
Total	**$1,034.4**	**$1,013.4**	**$795.8**	**$583.9**	**$568.9**

[a]Customs data for 1991 and 1992 are unavailable.

Source: Indicated federal agencies.

COUNTERNARCOTICS FUNDING IN SOURCE COUNTRIES
(FISCAL YEARS 1991-1995)

Dollars in millions

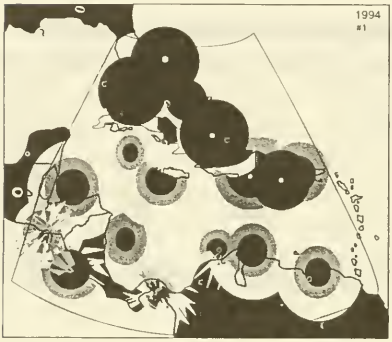
Agency	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995
DOD	$76.1	$120.7	$154.9	$144.5	$148.7
Customs	[a]	[a]	6.0	3.9	5.2
DEA	18.4	21.5	21.0	20.7	21.3
State	160.7	123.6	105.1	55.2	54.8
Total	**$255.2**	**$265.8**	**$287.0**	**$224.3**	**$230.0**

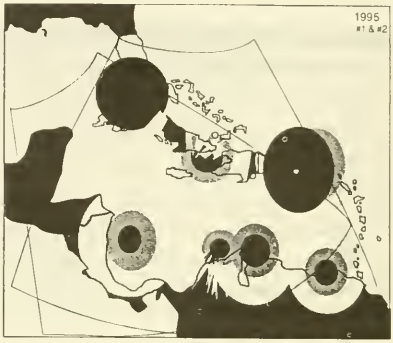
[a]Customs data for 1991 and 1992 are not available.

Source: Indicated federal agencies.

APPENDIX III APPENDIX III

LOST RADAR SURVEILLANCE CAPABILITIES (1994-1995)





JIATF-EAST MARITIME ASSETS (FISCAL YEARS 1991-95)

In number of ship days

Ship type	**1991**	**1992**	**1993**	**1994**	**1995**
Logistic	128	287	71	40	0
Cruiser	524	558	753	742	488
Destroyer	909	699	602	118	224
Frigate	1,874	2,008	1,441	785	727
Amphibious	51	87	188	9	0
Coast Guard	0	0	138	0	401
Other	750	533	1,255	974	1,005
Total	**4,236**	**4,172**	**4,448**	**2,668**	**2,845**

(711202)

Mr. ZELIFF. Maybe you could elaborate a little more on your recommendations that have been accepted.

Mr. FORD. Mr. Chairman, the main recommendation in our report was a call for a regional action plan with measurable goals and objectives and outlining the resources to be devoted for interdiction. The comments we received from the drug czar's office said they agreed with the recommendation and they were in the process of putting together such a plan. That is the extent of the information I currently have as to where they stand with that effort.

Mr. ZELIFF. The gentleman with you, Mr. Louis Zanardi, did I pronounce that right?

Mr. ZANARDI. That is correct.

Mr. ZELIFF. Where's your involvement?

Mr. ZANARDI. I was in charge of this particular assignment and I was the key author of the report itself.

Mr. ZELIFF. Would you comment on the same question in terms of recommendations that were accepted by the drug czar's office, but not implemented?

Mr. ZANARDI. It was basically one recommendation in which we were looking for an overall plan. As we were discussing this issue with various law enforcement and DOD officials, they stressed upon us that there was a need to have an overall action plan. Although individual agencies had their own operational plans, there was nothing that fitted together as a singular program and allocation of assets.

Mr. ZELIFF. That seems to be a reasonable recommendation.

Mr. ZANARDI. That is why we made it, sir.

Mr. ZELIFF. I would like to go to Dennis Hastert from Illinois, who is the point guy I am working with representing our leadership in our total commitment to this effort. Mr. Hastert.

Mr. HASTERT. Just to followup on your question on a timely basis, which drug czar did you make the recommendation to?

Mr. FORD. Most of our work was performed before the current drug czar took office.

Mr. HASTERT. Did you have discussions with the current drug czar on these same issues?

Mr. FORD. No, sir. We have not.

Mr. ZELIFF. We would certainly like to encourage you to do that and if we could help in any way we would be happy to accommodate any request for assistance. I think you would find that the current drug czar is very receptive and is looking for input. And I certainly think our subcommittee's efforts here center in on making sure we have an overall commitment plan that all the agencies, all the efforts that can tie into this, if we don't have that plan then we are going to have a disjointed effort. If we do have a plan, we have a possibility of winning the effort, and I think it is vital and we appreciate you bringing it up.

I had a couple of other quick questions and I would like to direct them to both of you, if I can, since you are both involved in this on resources that get diverted to Haiti and Cuba. You find other resources getting diverted, in other words, resources that are originally set up for the drug war. Do you see examples besides just Haiti and Cuba resources getting diverted to other areas?

Mr. ZANARDI. Yes, the AWACS was diverted for the Gulf war, things of that nature. There are other assets that are diverted for various priorities that the administration——

Mr. ZELIFF. So would you say that it is fair to assume that we don't have a consistent, straightforward, long-term commitment that gets uninterrupted?

Mr. FORD. I think it is difficult for us to judge what the priorities are, sir. The decision to defer AWACS for the Gulf war, for example, I don't want to second guess that judgment. I think you have to look at what the situation is at the time and I think there should be a commitment, but I think you have to take it in context with whatever the current policy is or whatever the key priorities are at the time.

Mr. ZELIFF. Let me try it a different way. If AWACS are currently transferred to Alaska and there is no Gulf war, would you say that that is helpful to the effort in the drug war?

Mr. FORD. I think to the extent they are part of the plan down there, of course, it would be a value.

Mr. ZELIFF. My hope is we somehow come out with a plan for a long-term commitment that is totally committed so we can win the war and we don't allow it to be interrupted by things like Haiti or Cuba. I think what happens is that anything that happens takes priorities over the drug war and in the end we don't have a drug war and that is what I am concerned about.

I would like to now recognize the vice chairman of the subcommittee, Mr. Ehrlich.

Mr. EHRLICH. A couple of observations and questions. With respect to the observation that the traffickers are utilizing improved technologies, I assume that is in the context of their new constitution on maritime transit rather than air transit. What new technologies have you found that they are actually utilizing?

Mr. FORD. We were told they use, for example, GPS, which allows them on an airplane to drop to a coordinate that is very accurate, and they don't have to use communications like radio communications which in the past we were able to use to detect the event. Now, they don't have to use the radios as much. They can go to a coordinate, drop it, and get picked up by a boat. It makes detection more difficult.

Mr. EHRLICH. It is relatively low tech. What we are dealing with at least in our trip to the Caribbean and talking to the folks down there—and we will have testimony on that later—is an awful lot of small-time operators without a whole lot of technology, but certainly a will to make a buck and ways to do it.

Mr. FORD. I can't dispute that. I am just going by what we were told. When we went down to the Joint Interagency Task Force they just told us this is a problem for them in terms of their overall operation down there.

Mr. EHRLICH. When we talk about the host nations and the problems we have dealing with them, I would just like your opinion on this question. We talk about capabilities that they have to support what we are trying to do, but my observation and my question to you is: Is it your observation that by far the most important element in that whole debate is the political will in the host country?

Mr. FORD. I think that the political will obviously is very important. If they are going to work with us to combat drug trafficking they have to politically support it or else whatever efforts we put in may not be very effective.

Mr. EHRLICH. Then we get into more complicated issues such as how poor people in those countries survive and the market economies in those countries, obviously.

Sir, you would like to——

Mr. ZANARDI. I don't have much to add on that, but clearly the political will is very important and that as we stated in the report the issue in terms of poverty and the income levels of the countries makes corruption a very real event.

Mr. EHRLICH. With respect to cocaine seizures in the transit zone, I note that seizures declined from a peak of 70,000 kilograms in 1992 to 37 in 1995. My question is at the peak the 70,000 seized do we have any idea of what percent of cocaine of the total amount of cocaine imported to this country that number represents?

Mr. FORD. For 1992?

Mr. EHRLICH. Yes, sir.

Mr. ZANARDI. The level has been pretty consistent, around 500 metric tons. It is been consistent in terms of the amount of cocaine coming into the United States. As the chairman indicated, the prices have gone down so there is some indication, then, that either demands have been reduced, which there is probably not much to support that or, in fact, there is more cocaine being produced and coming into the United States now.

Mr. EHRLICH. The demand certainly has not been reduced, you would agree.

Mr. ZANARDI. You see an increase now based on the statistic.

Mr. EHRLICH. The numbers are fairly consistent over the last 5, 10 years.

Mr. ZANARDI. Right.

Mr. EHRLICH. That is all I have now, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. Mrs. Thurman.

Mrs. THURMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I need to go back to what was in your report and maybe one of the statements in the opening statements that the chairman suggested on the level of money that has been put into interdiction, and they said it went from about $1 billion in fiscal year 1992 to $569 million.

I know when we received our national drug control strategy 1996 with a program resources and evaluation—gosh, that was a quick 5 minutes—did, in fact, what we have as a number 1.9 and 1.2. Can you give me or can you reconcile those numbers for me as compared to what we have been given, the interdiction dollar amounts compared to what has been listed in your report?

Mr. FORD. I can just tell you what our numbers are based on the numbers you are referring to. I can only speculate. I believe our numbers refer to the international aspect of drug interdiction. It does not include border operations or any domestically oriented operations that may be included in that interdiction figure that I think you cited.

Mrs. THURMAN. Your numbers are very limited. It doesn't take in any other areas——

Mr. FORD. This is international interdiction, just the drugs that are coming through the transit area.

Mrs. THURMAN. Thank you for clarifying that.

As you noted in my opening remarks, in looking back in 1993, the GAO had concluded that that interdiction is unlikely to have a significant impact on the national goal of reducing drug supplies in the United States. That was a GAO report in 1993. Then in another statement GAO said that some level of interdiction is needed to demonstrate the U.S. resolve against illegal drug trafficking activities, 1994. Then this year's report as concluding that more interdiction than today is necessary. There seems to be a change in the position, but more importantly can you explain to me why?

Mr. FORD. First of all, I don't—we have not said in our report that there ought to be an increase in interdiction. We just report what the actual situation is and show that there has, in fact, been a decline.

Our previous reports indicated that the analysis we did at that time—we were unable to find any quantifiable measures that indicated to us that the amount of investment we were making in interdiction was leading to the desired result. One of the points I want to make this morning is that when we made a recommendation in this report we asked that the drug czar's office come up with quantifiable indicators so that the Congress can determine whether or not the investment we are making is paying off.

So I don't think there is a contradiction between what we said in the past and what we are saying now. The question is whether or not there ought to be an increase in interdiction. It is not for us to make; it is for you to decide. I don't think this contradicts our position.

Mrs. THURMAN. The GAO report dismissed the activities. The Joint Interagency Task Force even while bemoaning the lack of coordination of activities among Federal officials, this group, operating out of Key West, FL, and headed by the Coast Guard coordinates a wide range of operations, including some with British vessels.

In addition, the south task force at SOUTHCOM coordinates operations in Latin America and the west group in California deals with the growing Asian heroin problem. Have you studied all of these task forces?

Mr. FORD. We have not studied all of these task forces on this particular effort. This one only focused on the task force in Key West. Apparently, we have also looked at JAFTA south, SOUTHCOM in the past.

Mrs. THURMAN. GAO notes on page 5 that there is a 1995 local law enforcement report concluding that airport smuggling into Florida, which is obviously a concern for me, has been increasing from the Caribbean. Have the Federal officials reviewed this report and what have they concluded—on what basis did the local agencies reach the conclusion, and can the subcommittee receive a copy of this local report? I think that would be a good, good interest for us from Florida.

Mr. FORD. I would be happy to provide that for the committee. We did not analyze the report from an evaluative point of view. The report is cited in our report mainly to indicate that there was

a viewpoint that there is, in fact, some increase in drug activity, and that is the extent of our analysis of it.

[The information referred to follows:]

BLUE LIGHTNING STRIKE FORCE

SPECIAL REPORT:
FLORIDA AIR THREAT
1995

BLUE LIGHTNING OPERATIONS
MIAMI, FLORIDA

DATE: June 1, 1995
FILE: 95-006JP

BLUE LIGHTNING OPERATIONS

Title: Special Report: Air Smuggling Threat

SYNOPSIS: There is increasing interest among Blue Lightning Strike Force Members for information on the air smuggling threat and its potential impact on the State of Florida. This report was developed at the request of the SAC/South Florida to identify significant trends and patterns regarding narcotics smuggling into Florida by private aircraft. This report examines air smuggling activity, including routes and methods, impacting the state of Florida. It also discusses statewide projections and law enforcement efforts to combat the air smuggling threat.

The BLSF collects information and intelligence on private aircraft, vessels and vehicle smuggling activities. The BLSF publishes a daily intelligence bulletin transmitted through TECS and FCIC, which highlights suspect aircraft and persons. This suspect data is entered into the Blue Lightning Information System (BLIS) database as appropriate. Strike Force personnel have begun soliciting information and intelligence on private aircraft smuggling activities at regional BLSF meetings. This liaison activity is also conducted at the Florida Air Smuggling Intelligence Group (FASIG) and Law Enforcement Alliance of Collier County (LA COCO) meetings in south and central Florida as well as at other statewide intelligence meetings.

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I. Executive Summary

Air smuggling indicators in Florida suggest a return to the 1970's and early 1980's when narcotics off loads within the state were common and airdropping offshore was a growing trend. Various local law enforcement agencies report numerous suspect aircraft operating in and out of Florida. Concerned citizens and law enforcement personnel frequently report low altitude aircraft flying lights out, suggesting that smuggling via private aircraft is occurring throughout the state.

Information gathered from statewide intelligence sources disclosed 29 aircraft incidents in the past year and a half. Of these, 16 were considered smuggling events and the remainder were suspected smuggling attempts. These incidents were collected from various law enforcement agencies throughout the state of Florida. Several of these incidents have been reported during the month of May. Many of these reports have come from members of the Blue Lightning Strike Force and the Florida Air Smuggling Intelligence Group (FASIG) as part of a coordinated effort to define the air threat.

Intelligence indicates narcotics are smuggled into the Florida area by private aircraft. Sources in the upper Florida Keys indicate that smuggling activity has increased in the Florida Bay/Everglades National Park area. Reports indicate back-country guides are retrieving airdropped contraband in flat-bottomed skiffs, which they are bringing ashore in remote areas of the upper Keys or Everglades National Park.

The theft of aircraft, primarily in the U.S., increased from 24 in 1993 to 34 during 1994. Intelligence indicates smugglers often use stolen aircraft to move contraband. At least eight aircraft have been stolen within the state of Florida since January 1, 1994. At least three of those stolen in Florida were used in subsequent smuggling ventures.

There has been a significant increase in the number of border intrusions by aircraft. There were 15 border intrusions reported during CY94 compared to 32 intrusions reported in CY95 during the first quarter alone. Stated another way, there were 3.75 border intrusions per quarter in 1994, compared to 32 intrusions in the first quarter of 1995.

There is a lack of intelligence regarding contraband smuggling activity in areas north of Cuba and in the western Bahamas. RAC/Nassau reported 33 airdrop incidents in these areas during CY 94, the most recent available statistics. Of these, 21 were considered smuggler successes, seven resulted in seizures, three were aborted and two were unknown.

Aerostat radar coverage for the Florida and Bahamas area is limited. Of the six sites previously constructed, only two are operational at this time. The aerostats have been a significant tool in the war against private aircraft smugglers.

Approximately 1,434 pounds of cocaine and 415 pounds of marijuana were recovered floating throughout Florida waters in 1994. Typically, floating contraband indicates air drop activity. This supports intelligence received that air drops are occurring closer to Florida.

II. Overview

The state of Florida encompasses 54,157 square miles in 67 counties of varying size, population and topography. Much of the terrain is flat and offers good visibility during daylight and dark, providing many opportunities to land small aircraft.

Historically, Florida has been a major entry point for the importation of illicit drugs by private aircraft. Law enforcement agencies have influenced transshipment points originating from South and Central America away from direct transit to Florida, but have not stemmed the flow of contraband into the state.

During the late 1970s and early 1980s smuggling by private aircraft was rampant throughout the state of Florida. Illegal drugs were off loaded from aircraft at international airports as well as unimproved airstrips and dirt roads.

In 1982 the Cudjoe aerostat radar began transmitting suspect aircraft data to the Customs facility at the FAA-ARTCC in Miami, Florida. The aerostat proved to be a valuable asset in the interdiction arena; additional Aerostats were deployed at Cape Canaveral, Florida and Grand Bahama Island near Freeport, Bahamas. These aerostat radars, along with the FAA and JSS radar systems, proved to be significant interdiction weapons and were responsible for forcing smuggling organizations to rethink their transportation routes into Florida. Using the middle and lower Bahama Islands and their landing strips as transhipment points for illegal drugs for ultimate shipment into Florida became commonplace.

Two additional aerostat radars were deployed in the Bahama Islands during the 1990s. One additional aerostat was recently deployed in the northwest coast of Florida. Once operational the combination of these aerostats and increased law enforcement pressure throughout the Bahamas caused an additional change in strategy by narcotic transportation groups. A shift to smuggling via commercial cargo and private aircraft flights from Colombia into northern Mexico became common place.

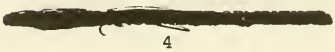
Smuggling activity and related events have recently begun to rise in the Florida and Bahama Island areas. Coincidently the aerostat radar network in the same area has been significantly reduced. The Cape Canaveral aerostat was removed from service in the late 1980s and more recently, the three aerostats deployed in the Bahama Islands have been shut down.

For example, law enforcement agencies throughout Florida receive reports of aircraft flying at low altitudes with lights out, landing on roads and other unauthorized locations. These are indicators that smuggling operations are taking place in the state at this time. Also, according to the Collier County Sheriff's Office, airdrops have been observed in Collier, Dade, Broward, St. Lucie, Indian River and Duval Counties and in other areas in central Florida. RAC/ Naples advised that at least three airdrops occurred around the southern edge of Lake Okeechobee during the last twelve months. Airdrops have been reported in the Gulf of Mexico off the southwest Florida coast.

Knowledge of law enforcement capabilities and flexibility are factors that enhance smuggling operations. Air smugglers are resourceful and respond rapidly to changing conditions. Their understanding of law enforcement capabilities is demonstrated by the shifting of trafficking patterns away from intensified enforcement efforts.

It is not difficult for the average pilot to learn radar limitations. For example, when a pilot requests flight following, one of the FAA centers may advise that, at 1,500 feet altitude, the aircraft is out of their radar coverage area. Also the transponder is a device used in the aircraft that receives a signal from ground radar and causes the aircraft to show up as a distinctive pattern on FAA ground radar scopes. The transponder lights when receiving the ground radar signal. A transponder that does not light indicates the absence of a radar signal at a particular location, and therefore, possible areas where radar is not active.

This assessment incorporates data provided by: SAC/North Florida, RAC/Naples, RAC/Nassau, USCS Headquarters, Miami Aviation Operations Branch, Customs National Aviation Center, US Coast Guard, El Paso Intelligence Center, Federal Aviation Administration, Florida Department of Law Enforcement - Law Enforcement Assistance Unit, Florida Highway Patrol, Florida Department of Transportation, Domestic Air Interdiction and Coordination Center, Boca Raton Police Department, New Smyrna Beach Police Department, Collier County Sheriff's Office, Osceola County Sheriff's Office and the Aviation Crime Prevention Institute, Inc.

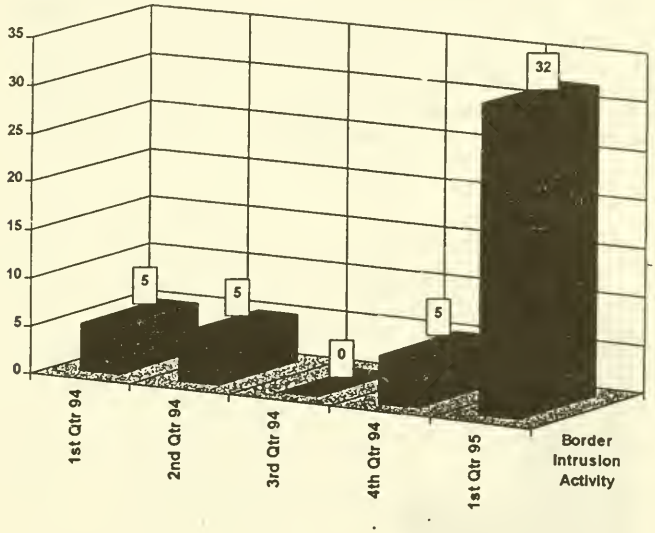


III. Air Smuggling Indicators

Air smuggling indicators in Florida suggest a return the early days of private aircraft smuggling. For example, in the 1970's and 1980's, narcotics off-loads within the state were common occurrences and in the early 1980's smugglers began dropping offshore due to increased pressure by law enforcement agencies inside Florida's border.

U.S. Customs Service investigations reveal that farm workers without apparent financial means are buying large tracts of land in the south central Florida area. These tracts of land could be used by smugglers landing aircraft for the off-load of contraband.

According to the Aviation Operations Reporting System, there has been a significant increase in the number of border intrusions into Florida by aircraft. There was a total of 15 border intrusions reported during CY94 compared to 32 intrusions reported in CY95 during the first quarter alone.

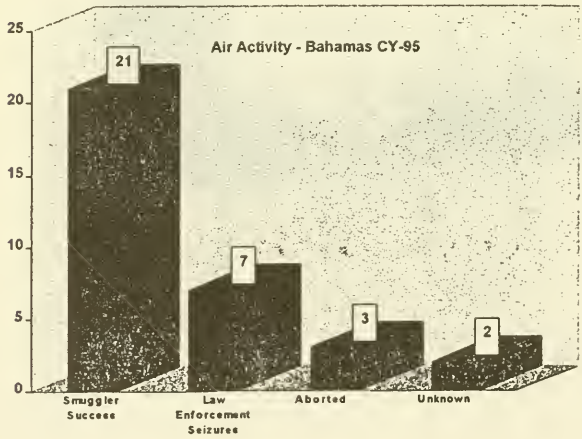


Sources in the fishing industry indicate that the July 1st restrictive net ban may drive Everglades City residents back into the smuggling trade. Most of the convicted smugglers of Operation Peacemaker have now been released from prison and intelligence indicates some may be smuggling at this time using air boats to facilitate recovery of airdropped narcotics. They operate tourist-related air boat ride concessions as a front operation.

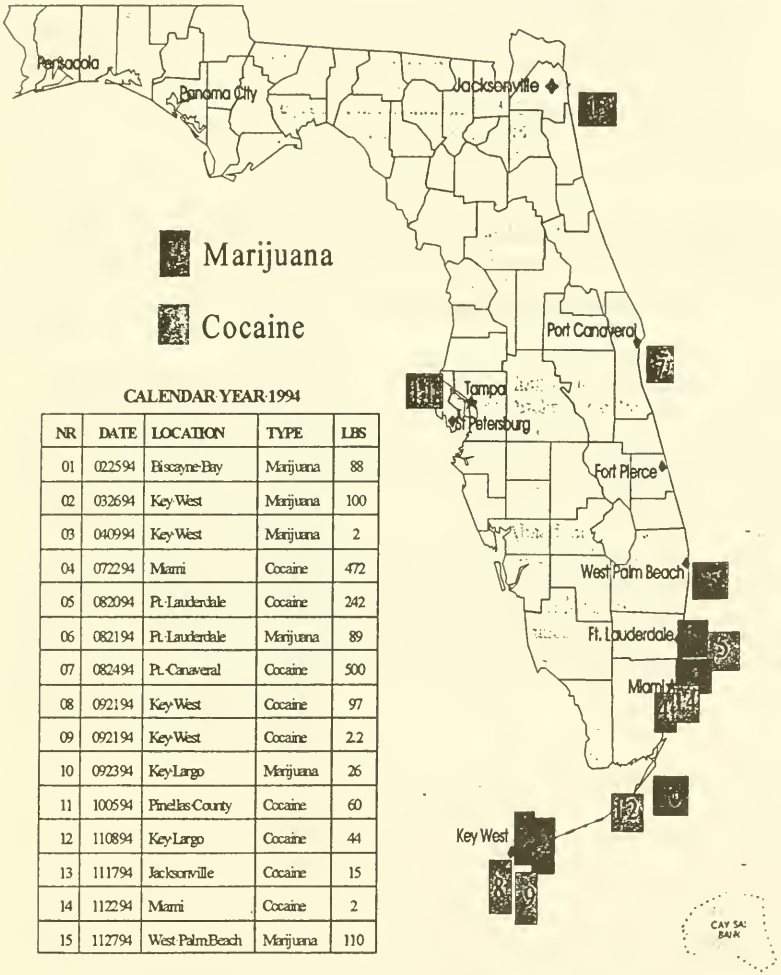
Low flying and other suspicious aircraft incidents continue to be reported at a steady pace by concerned citizens and law enforcement personnel. These incidents occur through out the state.

Significant amounts of floating or abandoned cocaine and marijuana were seized in Florida waters in 1994. Approximately 1,434 pounds of cocaine were seized in nine locations and 415 pounds of marijuana were recovered floating in six locations. Of these, 716 pounds of cocaine were seized off the Miami/Ft. Lauderdale coasts. Typically, floating contraband indicates air drop activity. This supports intelligence received that air drops are occurring closer to Florida.

Intelligence studies indicate the Bahamas is a transshipment point for drug smugglers who bring cocaine and marijuana into south Florida by private aircraft. There are approximately 80 improved and unimproved airstrips throughout the Bahamas for fueling, loading and unloading of contraband. RAC/Nassau reported 33 airdrop events in the Bahamas during CY94. Of these, 21 were considered smuggler successes, seven resulted in seizures, three were aborted and two were unknown. Drug prices in Nassau indicated a stable cocaine market during the second quarter of FY95. Sources also indicate a strong market for marijuana coming out of Colombia and Jamaica.



LOCATION OF FLOATING COCAINE AND MARIJUANA



CALENDAR YEAR 1994

NR	DATE	LOCATION	TYPE	LBS
01	022594	Biscayne Bay	Marijuana	88
02	032694	Key West	Marijuana	100
03	040994	Key West	Marijuana	2
04	072294	Miami	Cocaine	472
05	082094	Ft. Lauderdale	Cocaine	242
06	082194	Ft. Lauderdale	Marijuana	89
07	082494	Ft. Canaveral	Cocaine	500
08	092194	Key West	Cocaine	97
09	092194	Key West	Cocaine	2.2
10	092394	Key Largo	Marijuana	26
11	100594	Pinellas County	Cocaine	60
12	110894	Key Largo	Cocaine	44
13	111794	Jacksonville	Cocaine	15
14	112294	Miami	Cocaine	2
15	112794	West Palm Beach	Marijuana	110

The exportation of aircraft to South America, Mexico, the Caribbean and other locations has long been a suspected source of transportation for smuggling organizations. Many of these aircraft sales transactions do not list the names and addresses of the purchasers. Systems checks reveal a number of sellers and purchasers are EPIC positive. During the period July 1, 1993 through June 30, 1994 exported aircraft are grouped as follows:

Single engine piston	117
Multi-engine piston	76
Single engine turboprop	5
Multi-engine turboprop	81
Multi-engine corporate jet	102
Multi-engine jet transport	45
Agricultural	47
Helicopters	92

During 1994, 34 aircraft were reported stolen to the Aircraft Crime Prevention Institute (ACPI), eight aircraft were stolen in the state of Florida. Some of these aircraft were stolen to smuggle contraband. The 1994 overall aircraft theft figure of 34 compares with 24 stolen in 1993.

Aircraft Theft Data from January 1, 1994 to Jan 3, 1995

Tail #	Make/Model	Date Stolen	Comment
N9192Y	Piper Navajo	1/3/95	Ditched near Jamaica. Stolen for smuggling
N5916V	Piper Cherokee	12/25/94	NFI
N6944A	Piper Aztec	12/3/94	Abandoned in NJ after radar stolen from the aircraft
N9090Y	Piper Navajo	12/3/94	Stolen for smuggling. Destroyed in Jamaica
N978CB	Piper Navajo	11/23/94	NFI
N63872	Piper Navajo	6/16/94	Stolen for smuggling. Destroyed in Blowing Rock, NC after a chase.
N17BT	Cessna 402B	1/20/94	NFI
N792VB	Piper Navajo	1/8/94	NFI

IV. Air Smuggling Techniques

Airdropping is a relatively safe way for a trafficker to transport contraband and minimizes the chance of losing an expensive aircraft in the process. Remote inland lakes can be used for airdrop sites to cushion falling packages and make interdiction difficult.

The successful interdiction of air smugglers who operate in foreign territories often requires written agreement, cooperation and communication with foreign countries. Many times overflight authorization is withheld making an end game impossible. Even with these requirements in place, coordination among law enforcement entities can take time, allowing traffickers to escape.

Convicted smugglers consistently report the technique of flying below the altitude of 500 feet towards an airport near the Florida coast and then, upon approach, sharply increasing altitude as if leaving that airport. Using this technique, they avoid radar detection.

There have been reports that smugglers fly two similar aircraft, "piggyback" style, into Florida from a foreign country. One aircraft flies slightly below and behind the other, producing a single aircraft "hit" to radar controllers on the ground. As the two aircraft approach the flight plan destination, the decoy aircraft, without contraband, lands and the second aircraft proceeds to its own destination with contraband aboard.

Smugglers can detect and abort operations if being followed. They employ ground crews to alert the smuggling aircraft by radio or visual signal if law enforcement aircraft are observed in the area. Successful contraband smugglers use GPS (Global Positioning System), LORAN, cellular telephones and other high tech electronics. Precise navigation is possible to within several meters and smugglers find that they can minimize communications with ground crews, which lessens the chance of interdiction.

Smugglers detect, adapt and take advantage of interdiction shortfalls. There are examples where smugglers have had access to law enforcement radio frequencies. Florida possesses many of the attributes needed by the smuggler such as: easy access, lack of detection assets, many sparsely populated areas and non-secure airports with easy ingress and egress. Some home built aircraft are designed with materials that make radar detection difficult and long distance flights possible on a minimal amount of fuel.

V. Air Smuggling Routes

Media attention has focused on a drug smuggling corridor from Puerto Rico to the United States mainland. Once a private aircraft has cleared at a Puerto Rican port of entry, it is not necessary to clear again in the United States if the aircraft has nonstop capability and files a flight plan. The aircraft can then fly to another location on the island, on load contraband, and fly into Florida.

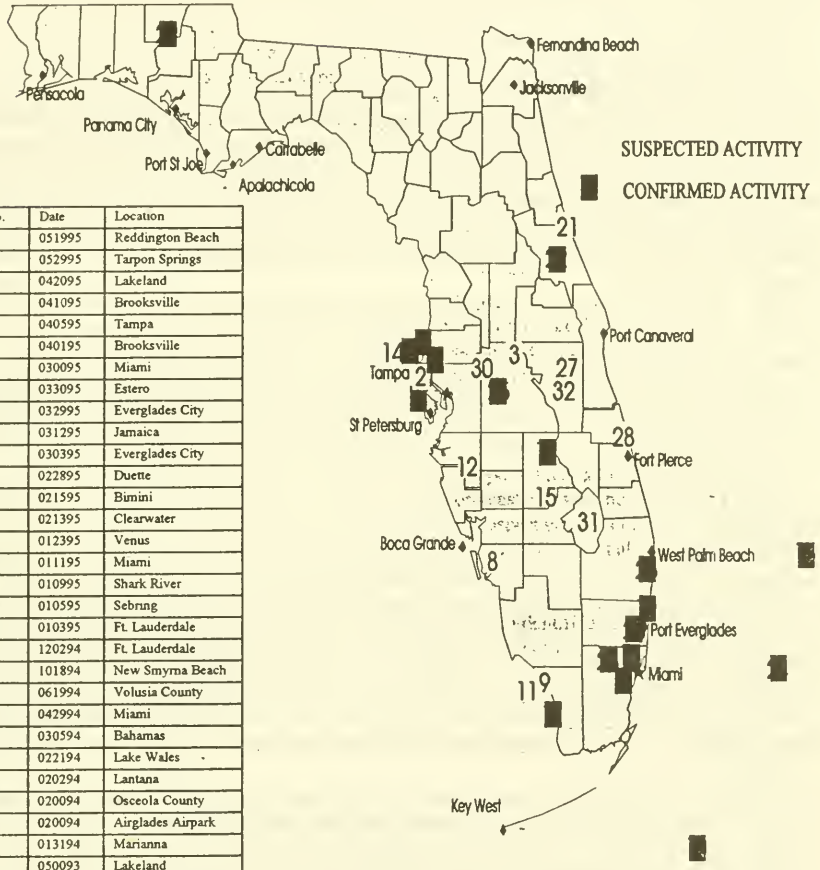
Smugglers depart Colombia, fly over Cuba into South Florida or fly over Haiti, then enter the east coast of the U.S. Smugglers depart Jamaica, flying directly over Cuba into the eastern U.S. or around Cuba via the Yucatan Channel and into the west coast of Florida. Many contraband deliveries via private aircraft have occurred in the eastern Caribbean area. These drugs are subsequently transported to Florida in a variety of ways including private aircraft.

Another entry route to the U.S. is to fly north from the Yucatan Peninsula, Mexico, travel to the area of 26 degrees latitude, and then turn east toward Florida. Once in the vicinity of the Florida coastline, the smuggling aircraft turns south or southeast in order to appear to be domestic air traffic. The lack of radar coverage in the Gulf of Mexico facilitates this activity.

There are numerous public airports in Florida which provide opportunities for contraband off loading. These airports close early, are not adequately lighted, provide little or no security and many are accessible by multiple roadways. There have been reports of suspicious events in and around the Ft. Pierce area and its airport reportedly has seven to eight access roadways. Boca Raton Airport has an electronic gate entry which can be easily defeated. There are other vulnerable airports, including Vero Beach, which are well known to law enforcement officers as high risk areas.

Within the counties of Broward, St. Lucie, Palm Beach, Martin, Indian River, there are 96 legally documented airports, including heliports. Of these, there are three airports pending licenses and thirteen public facilities. Additionally, the Florida DOT advises there are approximately 25 to 28 illegal airstrips, some paved and others grass, where owners have never received legal authorization to operate.

AIR INCIDENTS AND SUSPECTED ACTIVITY



No.	Date	Location
1	051995	Reddington Beach
2	052995	Tarpon Springs
3	042095	Lakeland
4	041095	Brooksville
5	040595	Tampa
6	040195	Brooksville
7	030095	Miami
8	033095	Estero
9	032995	Everglades City
10	031295	Jamaica
11	030395	Everglades City
12	022895	Duette
13	021595	Bimini
14	021395	Clearwater
15	012395	Venus
16	011195	Miami
17	010995	Shark River
18	010595	Sebring
19	010395	Ft. Lauderdale
20	120294	Ft. Lauderdale
21	101894	New Smyrna Beach
22	061994	Volusia County
23	042994	Miami
24	030594	Bahamas
25	022194	Lake Wales
26	020294	Lantana
27	020094	Osceola County
28	020094	Airglades Airpark
29	013194	Marianna
30	050093	Lakeland
31	042893	Lake Okeechobee
32	000093	Osceola County

Mrs. THURMAN. But we don't know how they came to that conclusion.

Mr. Chairman, that is all I have for now. Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you, Mrs. Thurman. I guess my question is as you wrote this report, what was your mission, what was your directive?

Mr. FORD. From the committee?

Mr. ZELIFF. Right.

Mr. FORD. Essentially, we had four basic mandates from the committee. First was to discuss the nature of the drug trafficking threat in the Caribbean region. The second was to identify host nation impediments to effective drug interdiction. The third was to discuss the capabilities of U.S. agencies to interdict drug trafficking and to identify the trends. And the fourth area was to look at the extent to which Federal agencies were planning and coordinating their activities.

Mr. ZELIFF. But you are saying, as I come back to it, it is not your position to determine whether we should put more money or not into the interdiction effort?

Mr. FORD. I think it has to be taken into the overall context of our strategy, and as we point out in the report, the administration in 1993 made a judgment we should shift our attention to the source countries.

Mr. ZELIFF. With no resulting shift in resources according to your report?

Mr. FORD. That is correct. We are not in a position to judge whether that is a proper judgment or not.

Mr. ZELIFF. I wonder, and I want to be fair here, but if you are going to spend time investigating a nation's drug war in the Caribbean, if I understand it right, you ought to be able to come back and tell us whether it is working, why it is not working and if in fact we are shifting resources and we are finding that we are losing the effort. It would seem to me that you would come back and tell us that.

Mr. FORD. I think our report does show, in fact, that our operations have declined there and that the success rates we had in the past were not the same today as they were.

Mr. ZELIFF. What we are saying is it—I don't mean to be disrespectful here, but I want to make sure I understand what you are saying. We have been down there and we see exactly that the shift in resources since 1992 has had a dramatic negative effect on our ability to do the job down there, so I am asking you do you agree with that?

Mr. FORD. Yes, the data shows that is the case. We produced—our results have gone down.

Mr. ZELIFF. We just got back from a trip to Panama, Mexico, Colombia, and Peru and we are starting to see—and we looked at source country efforts, and we can see the effects of what happens when you put less resources in or you don't transfer that funding. You are expecting an awful lot with very little effort. And we are putting people's lives on the line both with the Coast Guard, DEA and others. For very little resources we could probably give them what they need to win the effort.

I guess what I would ask you is, on balance, whether you do it from SOUTHCOM or JIATF's or wherever. We have been in Puerto Rico. We understand what is going on there. I assume you have taken an overall view of this thing. What we are trying to do is come back with how to change this thing to make it work? That is what Dennis Hastert is trying to do.

He is representing leadership and trying to make a massive effort to see that we have the plan you are talking about in place, seeing that we actually do declare war on drugs and see that we actually win the war. Why fool around with this thing if in fact we need to make a commitment and it seems to me we are not making that commitment. How do you feel about that?

Mr. FORD. I think that, again, I think our work shows that the level of commitment today or at least prior to the current drug czar anyway, was not necessarily at the same level it had been in the past.

Mr. ZELIFF. At the same level of effectiveness as well? Not only just the money expended, but——

Mr. FORD. The level of effectiveness in terms—again, I can only comment on the Caribbean area. I don't want to make a judgment for the overall program.

Mr. ZELIFF. Just do the Caribbean.

Mr. FORD. The data shows we have not been as effective as we have been in the past.

Mr. ZELIFF. Now, in any way, shape, or form if you had to answer why it has not been effective and you had to come up with three reasons, what would they be?

Mr. FORD. I think we point out in our report, I don't know if it was three. It might have been three.

Mr. ZELIFF. Or four or two.

Mr. FORD. I think, first of all, we indicated the lesser amount of operations is the factor.

Mr. ZELIFF. The less amount of the operations down there are definitely a factor.

Mr. FORD. We think another factor is the increased sophistication of the drug traffickers themselves.

Mr. ZELIFF. Let's talk about that.

Mr. FORD. The fact they have shifted apparently to maritime, I am sure the admiral can tell you more than I can about the difficulties of detection in monitoring maritime. We were told there are thousands of ships transporting in the Caribbean at any one time.

Mr. ZELIFF. Let me ask you one quick question because I think it is applicable to your testimony at this time. We saw that happening. You said in your testimony we basically downsized or reduced the amount of radar surveillance in the area; is that correct?

Mr. FORD. Yes, that is correct.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you, I didn't mean to interrupt you. I thought that was important. What is your next?

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Chairman, could I bring something up here because I think this is a really important——

Mr. ZELIFF. Absolutely, as long as we don't lose the train of thought on his next item.

Mrs. THURMAN. This kind of goes into what you are saying because he did this one area within the Caribbean, one of the things that we are also seeing, and I think one of the points he is trying to make sure is there is an overall picture because at the same time the decline in the Caribbean may be happening, there also is a shift going over to the Mexico area where 70 percent of this is coming in. Is that kind of what you are saying, that you are seeing some of that shift or potentially that shift toward the Mexico borders and some of those areas for interdiction purposes or have you just not looked at that?

Mr. FORD. I don't know if I would call it a shift. We know, according to the law enforcement community, about 70 percent of the cocaine does, in fact, come through Mexico, but I don't know if that is a shift from the Caribbean.

Mr. ZANARDI. I might add when you were looking at budget figures those figures include both Mexico and the Caribbean, so in terms of dollar shifting, there hasn't been any significant shift to Mexico at this particular time.

Mr. ZELIFF. I just reclaim my time here. What I am hearing you say, and we are looking at why the results are as disappointing as they are and one thing is that the traffickers change their strategy. They are much more sophisticated now as a result of seeing a change in strategy.

What do we do? We reduce radar surveillance in the area. If we want to win, that is probably not the smart way to win it. And I just—when we shift resources and we say we shift resources out of the transit zone into source country, but we don't do that, we say that, but we don't do it. Then what happens is the whole strategy falls apart. We are not giving people in the source country the assets they need nor are we lessening the successful effort prior to 1992. I worry about the fact—I guess it ties into your basic recommendation that we need a plan. And the plan, if it is to win, we would be doing different things. Would you agree with that?

Mr. FORD. Yes, sir, I would.

Mr. ZELIFF. Mr. Hastert, I am sure has some good questions.

Mr. HASTERT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to follow on this idea of trends or what is happening here. Mr. Zanardi, you are the author of the report. Do you see—lets use the word, "trends." Do you see a difference in trends? Has there been an increase in trafficking previously from Colombia up through the Caribbean using Puerto Rico and Haiti and maybe the Dominican and that area up through the United States? Has there been a shift in that area that you can see over a number of years to Mexico because clearly we said 70 percent of the product moves from Colombia to Mexico and up through the United States.

Mr. ZANARDI. For the last 5 years the Caribbean has accounted for 30 percent of the trafficking. All the reports we have been able to look at the drug traffic from Mexico is generally estimated around 70 percent. The difficulty you have is that nobody really knows how much drugs are coming through Mexico or the Caribbean. They just simply don't have a good way of knowing what the drug traffickers are doing. They do these estimates based on seizures and other types of data.

Even in the case of the air trafficking reports and things of that nature, if you look at the lines you see so many lines going out toward the Caribbean, you see very few lines going up through the Mexican area. But it doesn't fit, then, with what is being reported in terms of the amount of cocaine going through Mexico. The other thing is that in the Caribbean, when you start looking at the number of events they are usually much smaller in operations. Where in the case of Mexico you could have 10-ton cargoes going into Mexico accounting for a lot more.

Mr. HASTERT. Smaller planes going into the Caribbean and 727's in Mexico, I understand that. Let me followup again, too. If you go into the Caribbean, do they, in your estimate have the effort there, the appropriate radars, the overflight eyes-in-the-sky situation, the very sophisticated planes or P–3's with forward-looking radar, whatever, has that effort increased or decreased?

Mr. ZANARDI. That has decreased.

Mr. HASTERT. Then the decrease, if you want to draw a parallel, sir, the decrease in amount of successful interventions or interdictions in this case has really paralleled with the increase and decrease in effort; is that true?

Mr. FORD. Yes.

Mr. HASTERT. So you can't say the decrease in effort is plausible because there has been a decrease in narcotics moving through the area?

Mr. ZANARDI. We really don't know. We don't know whether the decrease is a result necessarily of a reduction in narcotics moving through the area.

Mr. FORD. The overall estimates are the amount of cocaine coming through is still a very sizable amount.

Mr. HASTERT. I just want to do simple logic here and sometimes we get deceived by simple logic. But if there has been a decrease in interdiction efforts and there has been a decrease in interdiction, that doesn't mean there has necessarily been a decrease in traffic. Do you agree with that?

Mr. ZANARDI. Yes, that is correct.

Mr. HASTERT. You said it is not your role to layout recommendations, but if you were making—if you were making recommendations to the Congress in this situation and you looked at this evidence that you have brought forward to us, where would you say we need to make improvements? Is it in the far eastern Caribbean, is it in the middle Caribbean? Where is it, in your estimate, a lack of interdiction or the radars or what needs to be done?

Mr. FORD. Again, if you are just focusing on the Caribbean what we would like to see in the plan that we called for is a set of measureable criteria with milestones that lays out what we hope to achieve there. We have seen this developed at least in one case down in Mexico. And we think that is the kind of thing we would like to see in the plan we call for in the drug czar's office that would help you make a decision about where the best investment would be.

I want to comment on the fact that I think our strategy has to be flexible because the drug traffickers are very flexible in the way they change their operations, and I think we have to be attentive

to that and hopefully through intelligence and other means we can stay on top of what is happening.

Mr. HASTERT. In your statement you say you have seen an increase in technology and sophistication by those people who traffic this product. Can you enlighten us besides just the coordinated drops of airplanes. They use sophisticated radar themselves or communications or what?

Mr. FORD. Again, I am going to defer. Hopefully, the Admiral can answer that with a little more precision. The reports we obtained from our discussions with the Joint Interagency Task Force down in Key West, they indicated to us that using such things as GPS and cellular technology made it much more difficult for our intelligence and our other operational detection and monitoring of events.

It was more problematic for them to identify who the bad guys were there. Now, the extent to which they are using it, I can't comment. I don't know. We didn't collect data that would tell us what level of sophistication there is.

Mr. HASTERT. Finally, one last question I would like to ask. Some of our intelligence sources tell us there is huge increased activities in Venezuela. That is the pressure gets put on Colombia. These sources are both the Wolverine movements, not the growing and manufacturing—some manufacturing in Venezuela, but the growing moves into the Venezuela area and has a place where possible points of departure, Punto Fijo and that area out there in the oil area of Venezuela. Have you seen that? Is that a different new track that you have observed or have any intelligence about?

Mr. FORD. Basically, sir, all we have seen is the same kind of reports we are referring to, but we don't have any other information about whether or not that area is now becoming a hot spot.

Mr. HASTERT. I thank the chairman. Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you, Mr. Hastert. I would just like to ask a question of—I will return to Mr. Cummings in a second. In your discussion, in your recommendation on an all centralized strategy that all the agencies can tie into, let me ask you this: Do you feel that there is a lack of quantifiable goals and things that can be measured, and do you think that is a central part of the problem?

Mr. FORD. Yes, sir, I believe that is so.

Mr. ZELIFF. I guess—do you have a handle in your report of how much cocaine is coming up through Puerto Rico? Did you look at that as well?

Mr. ZANARDI. Can I answer that about 28 percent of the cocaine traffic through the Caribbean is moving through Puerto Rico based on current estimates.

Mr. ZELIFF. And a major shift in increase?

Mr. ZANARDI. Right.

Mr. ZELIFF. Part of the problem is once it gets into Puerto Rico, it is like a State and there is no prevention in terms of moving forward to the States?

Mr. ZANARDI. That is correct.

Mr. ZELIFF. Do you have any recommendations on that piece of it?

Mr. ZANARDI. This is a very difficult issue in terms of States' rights and things of that nature so I think that is really a political issue as well as a problem.

Mr. ZELIFF. Did you get into the radar technology and the intelligence piece involving Puerto Rico?

Mr. ZANARDI. No, we did not.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK. Mr. Cummings from Maryland.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. About 10, 12 years ago the United States emphasized at sea interdiction in the eastern Caribbean, especially in the Bahamas. In response, the cocaine cartel shifted their distribution practices relying less on small planes entering Florida and more on containers and large planes landing in Mexico.

Has the amount of cocaine being sent by sea been reduced? Have you been able to determine how much of that is due to reduced U.S. capabilities, increased sophistication of traffickers and a preference for maritime smuggling?

Mr. FORD. I think clearly we have been told that they do believe there is an increase in maritime smuggling of cocaine. I don't know—I don't think there is any precise estimates of what it is, but they think it is definitely on the increase. I am sorry I didn't catch the second part of your question.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I asked you as far as—have you been able to determine whether the shift has been due to reduced U.S. capabilities, increased sophistication of the traffickers, and a preference for maritime smuggling?

Mr. FORD. We think it is a combination of all of those.

Mr. CUMMINGS. So they are kind of catching up and figuring out how to get around what we are trying to do?

Mr. FORD. Yes, I think that's right. They are constantly shifting their operations. That is why I mentioned earlier we need to be flexible in the way we deal with that.

Mr. CUMMINGS. The launch radar surveillance capabilities concern me. On the one hand, I am troubled that the GAO concluded that the rise in radar is less likely to detect an area and not as accurate as microwave radars. On the other hand, if traffickers are shifting to maritime operations, what have we really lost?

Mr. FORD. I really can't comment on that, sir. We were told when we were down there at the joint task force that the reduced capabilities have hampered their efforts to detect air events. Maritime events, to the best of my knowledge, are primarily based on intelligence and the level of effort we have in that I assume is fairly substantial, but I don't think there is a correlation between the radar coverage and what we pick up through intelligence on maritime.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I will yield the rest of my time, Mr. Chairman, to Mrs. Thurman.

Mrs. THURMAN. Have you made any recommendations, then, in the shift to maritime from the GAO's perspective of what besides intelligence that we might be doing to be better as you might say than what we are doing today?

Mr. FORD. Well, first of all, I want to say that we did not evaluate the maritime operations down there. I want to make that point.

I could refer—we did learn that the drug czar's office commissioned a study, I believe, in 1994, to look at interdiction in general and to try to make an analysis of what the benefits of an increased investment in interdiction might be. And although there were a lot of methodological issues with the study, one of its findings was that, in terms of priority, they felt because of the maritime threat there ought to be an increased level of intelligence emphasis in the program. We talked to several law enforcement and DOD officials, and they generally agreed with that position.

So, again, that's the best information that we had available when we did our work. But there seems to be a general consensus that expanding intelligence would help fight the maritime problem.

Mrs. THURMAN. So have they——

Mr. ZANARDI. There is one thing.

Mrs. THURMAN. Sure.

Mr. ZANARDI. There is an effort by the administration to increase or improve the technology for inspections of container ships. I don't know exactly what the status of that is, but it's something that certainly deserves consideration.

Mrs. THURMAN. So there seems to be some steps based on the 1990 report, where they are—or 1994 report where they are actually doing one.

Has there been any evidence that there has been some shift in some intelligence?

Mr. ZANARDI. There has been a—the amount of intelligence events has increased, and there has been an increased effort on human intelligence, and you see more examples of that. So I would suggest that there has been a greater effort to improve intelligence.

Mrs. THURMAN. So then, in fact, they are taking one report that you have done and utilized it in areas where everybody seems to be saying that this is what we ought to be doing? That is happening then, you think?

Mr. ZANARDI. Yes, but in the DEA's response to us, they still emphasized that they believe that intelligence was underfunded. So they are not quite satisfied with the level of intelligence support that they are receiving.

Mrs. THURMAN. Well, and part of that is us.

Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you.

I just make a comment, as we are working with Barry McCaffrey and his effort and request, we are trying—we are working on an increased funding level. Our problem is, we are trying to make sure that the funds go in the right areas and that it's balanced.

So I just—in reference to the comment that we are increasing funds, the problem is that we need accountability of those funds and we need to make sure that they are being properly applied in the right areas.

I believe we have one question each with Mr. Hastert and Mr. Ehrlich.

Mr. HASTERT. Thank you. I actually have two questions, if I can squeeze it in.

Mr. ZELIFF. You can have two or three or four.

Mr. HASTERT. All right. The first question is that, Mr. Zanardi or Mr. Ford, one of you, said that 28 percent is coming actually through Puerto Rico, in your estimation. That's pretty precise.

Did you go around and—you know, how much—if you have that kind of peg on Puerto Rico, what's coming directly into the United States without intermediate transit is an amount coming through Haiti and the Dominican? Is there something coming through the Bahamas?

Can you kind of give us at least a scenario in general on what those sources are, how that comes up, of the 30 percent that is coming through the Caribbean area?

Mr. FORD. I am not sure we have——

Mr. ZANARDI. Well, just by deduction, if 28 percent is going through Puerto Rico, the rest of it is going directly into the United States.

Mr. HASTERT. Yes, I understand that. But can you kind of give us a rate of how that stuff—what is coming from Haiti and the Dominican, and what is coming from the Bahamas, and what is coming directly from——

Mr. ZANARDI. I don't have that information available, sir, but we do——

Mr. HASTERT. But you do have 28 percent?

Mr. ZANARDI. Right.

Mr. HASTERT. Any idea at all? I mean, where is the rest of it coming from, how?

Mr. ZANARDI. If you look at our report, on page 4 there's a description of how the—where the cocaine is being delivered. So it would be within the area where the circle is, and also through Haiti.

Mr. HASTERT. So actually it is coming up through Haiti, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands?

Mr. ZANARDI. Right.

Mr. HASTERT. And then——

Mr. ZANARDI. Then from there it goes north.

Mr. HASTERT. And you say that the best probably detection—we can do the radar in the air and stuff—the best detection there is actually intelligence; I mean, people telling you where something is?

Mr. ZANARDI. For the maritime—for maritime operations, intelligence seems to be the most critical factor.

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Ford, you referred to the ONDCP transit zone study. That study said that if it added $200 million to $300 million, it would result in a 23 percent reduction in drugs coming into the country. Could you comment on that?

Mr. FORD. Yes, that's true. But it also said that it had an error margin rate of 20 percent.

Mr. HASTERT. But I figured when you said $200 to $300, it would be 23 percent, I thought that there was a margin of error someplace in that.

Mr. FORD. Well, OK. Regardless, I mean, we didn't—we didn't evaluate the study to see whether it's right or wrong. We put it in the report to indicate, first of all, that the administration was looking at the issue and looking at it in terms of what kind of potential value you would get for an increased investment.

We did ask the law enforcement community their views of the study. They didn't support it, particularly the DEA.

Mr. HASTERT. Did not support it?

Mr. FORD. Right. DEA felt that the analysis was—that the conclusions in the study were questionable, because they don't really know how much actual cocaine is coming into the United States.

So I'm not—I'm not in a position to say that the study is right or wrong, but it is an attempt to try to match investment with what a potential payoff may be.

Mr. HASTERT. I appreciate that effort. What we are trying to do—and I just want to make it perfectly clear—is to find out where the problems are, how best to put, at least from our point of view, the investment and try to make sure that investment gets there.

Mr. FORD. Sure.

Mr. HASTERT. And pinpoint it as best as possible. So I mean, I know we have asked you questions from different tangents here, but that's why.

Do you care to comment, Mr. Zanardi?

Mr. ZANARDI. Well, I would say that the study itself recognized that they did not want to just include the transit zone but they also wanted to look at where you would put money in the source country, so it becomes an issue of where you make your investment.

But I think what's important is that there be some expectation as to what we will accomplish with the investment, and I think that—needs to be done as we consider increased investment in the drug war.

Mr. HASTERT. And your scope did not look at the source countries or Mexico; is that correct?

Mr. FORD. Right.

Mr. ZANARDI. That is correct.

Mr. HASTERT. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you, Mr. Hastert.

I just would like to comment. We know where we were in 1992, we know what happened as a result of making some changes in strategy, and so whether it's 23 percent, which is roughly 25 percent of the total cocaine coming into the country, whether there's a margin of error of any number, I think we know from a practical basis if we reduce the amount of resources in, we are going to have a negative effect on what we are doing.

And the results right now are not good. At least that's what I am reading from your report. And so it can lead us to a conclusion that I think we can probably use in what we are trying to accomplish here.

Mr. Ehrlich.

Mr. EHRLICH. I think the bottom line to all of this is, as you know, our chairman feels very strongly about the fact that this is a multipronged approach, and the resources and assets and the accountability have not been there with respect to particularly the transit zone element of this whole thing.

One just followup question. In answer to the chairman's question with respect to the quantifiable nature of goal-setting in this whole thing, I did not understand your answer, Mr. Ford. I just want to followup.

Is it your view that the interagency task force should set—has not been setting quantifiable goals with respect to interdiction or whatever—whatever category you want to come up with on a yearly basis? They have not been, and they should, and that should be something that must be a focus of our subcommittee for the future?

Mr. FORD. Yes, well, I think basically what our point is that—I think individual agencies may have some quantifiable indicators, but we are looking at a broader——

Mr. EHRLICH. Right.

Mr. FORD [continuing]. Overall integrated plan down there that encompasses not only your detection and monitoring but also, what are you going to do in the host countries? What are you going to do to improve their political will to fight the drugs? What assistance do we need to provide, and how do we measure that? I think we are talking about an integrated approach, I guess I want to call it.

Mr. EHRLICH. Right—integrated goals.

Mr. FORD. Right. I don't want to say that individual agencies don't have some indicators, I am sure that they do, but they are generally focused only on their unique mission.

Mr. EHRLICH. I agree, and that's been a problem. And thank you very much.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you, Mr. Ehrlich.

I would like to address my remaining questions here to Mr. Zanardi and just go back in the same kind of process that I was talking about earlier with Mr. Ford.

What we asked you all to do is four things, the nature—to review the nature of drug trafficking activities that occurred in the transit zone, particularly in the eastern Caribbean host country; host nation impediments to an effective regional strategy; three, the capabilities of United States agencies to interdict drug trafficking activities throughout the Caribbean transit zone; and, four, the extent of Federal agency planning, coordination, implementation of United States interdiction efforts.

And then on page 2 of the report, just two comments I will throw out, and then I would ask you to give us the three or four things you think we need to kind of concentrate on as a result of your effort here.

Funding for drug interdiction declined from about $1 billion in fiscal year 1992 to $569 million in fiscal year 1995. DOD's budget reductions resulted in fewer ship days, flight hours, and ground-based radars devoted to drug interdiction.

While a reduction in the interdiction effort was envisioned in the new cocaine strategy, the strategy also anticipated an increase in source country funding that never materialized. Cocaine seizures in the transit zone declined from a peak of 70,336 kilograms in 1992 to 37,181 kilograms in 1995.

So maybe just with that as an overview, give us the three or four things—after spending this time on this report doing what we had asked you to do, give us the three or four things that we need to include in our strategy and where we are going as we work with General McCaffrey.

Mr. ZANARDI. Again, the most important point would be for the general to provide you some indication of what he expects to get out of increased investment.

Clearly, one thing we would not recommend would be that we would go back to the layout that was in the past because, as we explained in the report, we do have a change in threat. So you don't necessarily want to do the same thing that you did in the past.

Mr. ZELIFF. And just for the benefit of all of us here, the change in threat is what?

Mr. ZANARDI. From air to maritime.

Mr. ZELIFF. Right. So the game—the rules of the game are changing. People are getting more sophisticated. We need to depend more on technology. Is that what you are saying?

Mr. ZANARDI. If in fact they can do an effective interdiction at the ports within South America, that would be probably a very effective way to counter the drug program. So you don't necessarily want to get it after it's gone out into the seas; you want to be able to get it as soon as possible.

Mr. ZELIFF. So are we talking about a balance between transit zone and also source country?

Mr. ZANARDI. Yes. We agree with almost everybody that says that you have to have a three-prong effort where you are looking at the demand side, looking at the transit zone, and looking at the source country.

What's important to consider is, where are you going to get the best benefit for new investment? And that work as far as we are aware hasn't been done. But I think that should be part of the commitment by the executive branch as to what can be done.

I mean, one of the problems always in the past has been that various agencies—like DOD has more money, so therefore they are easier to fund.

What we have to look at is what we can really get from the investment, and the Congress has a difficult position because they have to maybe shift from one source to another source.

Mr. ZELIFF. Well, let me ask you this then: Getting off the transit zone, going into source country programs, you looked at those as well?

Mr. ZANARDI. I have not looked at the source countries, so that's sort of beyond me.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK. I thought we had—I thought one of the things we talked about here was——

Mr. FORD. We are going to be doing destination——

Mr. ZELIFF. Post station impediments to effective regional strategy.

Mr. ZANARDI. We are not looking at the source countries, but we are looking at the Caribbean countries as they relate to the interdiction zone.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK. I would encourage you to revisit that issue, because I think previous reports had indicated—one thing, I think based on our trip, you will find some encouraging news that, with very minor increases in resources, we can—we can do a tremendous amount of good in source country programs. The same thing with interdiction.

Would you agree with that statement on interdiction in the transit zone as well as source country?

Mr. ZANARDI. What is that?

Mr. ZELIFF. To the degree you can, with minor, minor, minor increases, very minor increases, in assets——

Mr. ZANARDI. I really can't make a comment on that because I have not had an opportunity to do the analysis.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK. How about the transit zone?

Mr. ZANARDI. The transit zone, I would think, as indicated by many of the people that we talked to, that increase in intelligence could probably be the best investment.

Mr. ZELIFF. Like radar capabilities in Puerto Rico?

Mr. ZANARDI. Not radar. Human intelligence and things of that nature.

Mr. ZELIFF. Right. So we definitely have some areas here that we can move forward on.

I thank you very much for your appearance here at the hearing. It has been very helpful. And we would like to leave the record open if other Members have questions that they would like to submit. I would like to leave the record open for 5 days. So, without objection, so ordered.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to thank them for being here as well.

We thank you very much.

Mr. FORD. Thank you.

Mr. ZANARDI. Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. OK. We have a vote coming up, Admiral Kramek. If you would be willing, why don't we recess now for 20 minutes. We will do the vote and come right back and open up with you. Thank you very much for appearing today.

We will be in recess for 20 minutes.

[Recess.]

Mr. ZELIFF. The Subcommittee on National Security, International Affairs, and Criminal Justice will now come to order and resume.

On our second panel we have Adm. Robert Kramek, the 20th Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard. Admiral Kramek has a long and distinguished history with the Coast Guard. In addition to his duties at the U.S. Coast Guard, Admiral Kramek is U.S. Interdiction Coordinator, a formidable job, if there ever was one.

We are anxious to have your insight into this important issue. Welcome, admiral.

Admiral KRAMEK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you for being here. If you would, it's the policy of the subcommittee to swear in our witnesses.

[Witness sworn.]

Mr. ZELIFF. Let the record show that the answer was in the affirmative.

Admiral, you have been before this subcommittee in the past, and we very much appreciate your commitment to the war on drugs. We would like you, if you would, to summarize as much as you can your testimony, and then the balance will be submitted for the record.

STATEMENT OF ADM. ROBERT KRAMEK, COMMANDANT, U.S. COAST GUARD

Admiral KRAMEK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning to you and the other distinguished members of the subcommittee.

I want to first thank you for your interest and leadership in this effort, to control the flow of drugs and eliminate drugs entering the United States. It's a tremendous scourge to all of our families, our population, and especially our children.

We are in the business of allocating scarcity, Mr. Chairman, amongst many of the national security issues that go on in the world today, and I think from listening to the GAO testimony I could sense that. And earlier this morning, and then after this, the next panel, I met with some of our operators who will probably share their frustrations in allocating the scarcity of their resources and time and all of the things that the Nation has given the Coast Guard to do.

First of all, let me state that I stand squarely behind the new 1996 Drug Control Strategy, and I know you and General McCaffrey have talked about that, and he has testified here before. I have met with him on many occasions already concerning this strategy and how it should be implemented, what type of plans we need, what type of approach we need to take in a 10-year effort that will probably result in a 5-year financial plan to answer many of the questions that the GAO panel brought up as to, are we allocating our resources in the right place to get the job done.

It's a balance, we all know that, a balance between demand and supply programs and the many programs that are made up in demand and supply. It needs total cooperation of over the not only 50 Government agencies but thousands of community and State agencies. It's a top national security issue.

And whether or not people want to debate that or not, I consider it on the top of the President's agenda. I was with him yesterday at a major speech in Connecticut where he again reiterated that he will do everything in his power to make sure that all law enforcement agencies and Coast Guard involved in interdiction of drugs are given sufficient tools to do that job.

As you and I discussed the many issues before, particularly this one, it needs bipartisan support. In order to win this effort, it takes a will to win in the United States. That means of all of our people and from both sides of the aisle. And I know that you have approached that exactly in that way, because the devastation of drug use on our people is significant, and we serve them all.

Mr. Chairman, the Coast Guard is involved in all five goals in the strategy but pretty much focused on goals four and five which we will talk about today.

I will make a distinction from time to time, if I may, between my role as the Commandant of the Coast Guard in that the Coast Guard is the lead maritime agency for interdiction of drugs, and we are the co-lead agency, with Customs, for the air interdiction of drugs coming into the United States. That's the Coast Guard lead agency role that we have been given.

The President gave me a collateral duty, as you mentioned, to be the U.S. Interdiction Coordinator for all drugs in the western hemisphere up to our borders.

I think that it would be helpful, based on the testimony we had this morning and also kind of to ground ourselves geographically with terms of threat and flows and how do we get about doing all of this stuff, if we can put up a chart that I brought with me. This is an operational chart.

Mr. Chairman, I would tell you that—people ask, well, how do we plan and what do we do?

As Interdiction Coordinator, the first thing I did a little bit over a year and a half ago was to bring together over 70 of the commanders involved in this effort together here to Washington.

As you know, I testified at a previous hearing. I said, "OK, here is the"—this included all law enforcement agencies, not just DOD but everybody involved—"Here is the strategy; here is the threat. How do we go about meeting that threat to reduce the flow of drugs into the United States the most effective way we can?"

Mr. ZELIFF. Admiral, can I just insert in the record the timing of that was November 1994?

Admiral KRAMEK. That's correct. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you, sir.

Admiral KRAMEK. I did that, and, as a result of that, we have reorganized a number of the disparate groups that were working by themselves into, we call them joint JIATF's—Joint Inter-Agency Task Forces.

But it's more than jointness with DOD. It includes Customs, DEA, FBI, CIA, National Security Agency, a group of folks in four or five locations that I now bring together on a quarterly basis here to Washington.

I just finished my quarterly U.S. Interdiction Coordinator meeting with them, including the entire joint staff in the Pentagon, and then I reported to General McCaffrey on what we saw as the latest threat and how we were going to counter that threat.

The threat changes daily. We can go by GAO reports to see where the smugglers are going. I would tell you, they are flexible on a 24-hour basis. Sometimes bureaucratically and planning wise, agencies take a long time to meet that. We can't; we have to be as flexible as they are.

The day after I held that meeting 2 weeks ago, Mr. Chairman, I met with 300 experts called the Linear Committee—you may have heard about them; you may not—who plan the focus of all of our intelligence and coordinate with me on where we can get the most bang for the buck.

When the CIA asks, "How should I focus my intelligence? On which 1 of these 10 things?" I meet with the Commissioner of Customs, the head of the DEA, the Assistant Secretary of State, Ambassador Gelbard, and I put together the priorities for them so they can focus their intelligence so we can get the most bang for the buck.

Now, I tell you that because all of the results of this is highly classified, and I would be delighted at some time to give you a closed hearing so that you can see the scope of what's being done. I can only tell you that there is a process to take care of that, and maybe there should be some oversight on it.

But I think you would—see that a great deal is being done as we try to allocate scarce resources, that we do have a process to

do that. The results of it, however, can't be published because then we would be tipping our hand to the other side of the table, and that's the smuggler trying to come into the United States.

Mr. Chairman, this is a drug threat in the transit zone. The GAO study really just focused on a small portion going up toward Puerto Rico.

Jim, if you could point out—I am sure everyone knows where Puerto Rico is on the chart. But the transit zone is all that area from the shoreline of South America, if you will, which we call the departure zone, not only up through the Caribbean—the Caribbean that the GAO report focused on was the eastern Caribbean.

My gosh, there's a western Caribbean, too. That goes up to the coast of Mexico and through the Yucatan Pass, which is a major transshipment point into the Gulf of Mexico. It also comes up through the eastern Pacific, where 250 metric tons, we feel, is flowing there.

There was some testimony earlier about, gee, why don't we see too many tracks there? Well, because they are 10 tons a shot. There's 12 tons in a ship that we just seized; 10 tons in a 727, our Caravelle jet, trying to land in Mexico; a lot of small, fast boats and other traffic where you see the north coast of Colombia and the 154 metric tons. There's about 180 tons that shoots off to Europe, at least that.

Now, these figures change a little bit, might be different estimates in different agencies. I would suggest the order of magnitude is all pretty close to what that is, plus or minus 10 percent. And on a daily basis, we see those arrows shifting.

The reason it's going up the eastern Pacific is because there's nobody there to stop them. That wasn't happening a couple of years ago.

But I can tell you that the Linear Committee has focused on that. We have already arrested the kingpin, seized two of his ships, and he is in jail in Panama. I can't give you any further details on that now, but there are efforts that have recently been taking place to do that.

So that while it might look in a statistical report like we are somewhat ineffective, when there are scarce resources we try to focus them into the sector where there's the greatest threat. Sometimes we are good at it, sometimes we are not too good at it, but that's the process that takes place.

Mr. Chairman, the transit zone effort is just one aspect of our supply side strategy. We also have to be successful in the source country. We also have to be successful in the arrival zone.

I would say, as we look at the history over the last 6 or 7 years of what has taken place, I do not see any large flights of cocaine or large boatloads of marijuana arriving in the United States of America. We have pushed it south, just like our defense strategy is to put the defense of the United States furthest from our shores, but it's landing in Mexico and we have a problem, and it's landing in Puerto Rico and we have a problem. And we can talk about that some more today.

But the initial effort was to protect the high value unit in defense terms, and that happened to be south Florida and the Gulf States and the landing zones of the United States. Now it's sent

to other countries where we have less control, repackaged, transshipped by human carriers or hidden and secreted in other cargo that makes it more difficult for us to find.

But, again, it's only one part of the strategy. As you know, I also support the source country strategy in a big way because if, in fact, we could be successful there, we will need less resources in the transit zone.

However, until the source country strategy is fully effective—and we are working on that, and we have had some recent successes which I would be delighted to tell you about—my opinion is that we need to keep up our defense in the transit zone to the level necessary so that we don't let 40, 50, or 60 tons of cocaine a year come unimpeded to our borders that will end up raining down on our children and our families.

In fact, we cannot leave our borders open in any way, and one of the goals of our strategy is to defend our air, land, and sea borders, where the Coast Guard's major role is. And that's because, Mr. Chairman, the demand-side programs won't have the credibility they need if we leave our borders open. It's the wrong thing to do.

There is a level of effort there necessary to do that. I do think that level of effort will change yearly or more frequently than that, depending on our success with demand programs, which are longer-term; depending on our success with source country programs, which can be shorter-term; depending on how well we focus our intelligence.

So this is a dynamic, and when General McCaffrey says it's a systems approach and we have to look at the dynamic and make our moves quickly, that's what we do.

Mr. Chairman, let me conclude by saying that it is true that the Coast Guard—now speaking with my hat as Commandant on—has had significant assets reduced from the war on drugs from a high of $638 million in fiscal year 1990 to a low of $234 million in 1994.

However, in the last several years, 2 to 3 years, the President has asked for sufficient funds for the Coast Guard to do its job and all of its jobs in drug interdiction, and each one of these years the Congress has not appropriated sufficient money to meet the President's budget in this area.

I am happy to say that in the 1997 budget, which I have already testified before the House and Senate approps and authorization committees, the Coast Guard is asking for $346 million, some of it from diverting assets from other priority mission areas, to accomplish the President's strategy in fighting the war on drugs. This is an increase for us.

If I were to leave this committee with anything, I think we are in the right direction. You certainly are understanding the problem. We understand the threat. We need the 1997 President's budget approved. We need the supplemental request the President sent up for 1996 approved because that kick starts this strategy, Mr. Chairman, and without that, we—you know, we have identified some of the shortfalls here.

I have programs ready to fill the gap, do stuff around Puerto Rico, stop stuff in the eastern Pacific. Without the $250 million supplemental in 1996, that will be delayed if we don't get that

money. Without the President's budget being approved in 1997, that will have to be delayed. And in 1998 and the out years, we are looking forward to working hard with General McCaffrey to making sure we implement and bring this strategy alive.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to make that statement, Mr. Chairman, and I would be very happy to answer yours or the committee's questions at this time.

[The prepared statement of Admiral Kramek follows:]

STATEMENT OF
ADMIRAL ROBERT E. KRAMEK
U.S. COAST GUARD
ON
THE NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL STRATEGY
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM AND OVERSIGHT
UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
MAY 23, 1996

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the subcommittee. I am Admiral Robert Kramek, Commandant of the Coast Guard. It is a pleasure to appear before you today to discuss transit zone drug interdiction operations in support of the 1996 National Drug Control Strategy.

First, let me say that the Coast Guard plays a significant role in supporting the National Drug Control Strategy (NDCS). The Coast Guard is the lead agency for maritime interdiction, and the co-lead for air interdiction along with U.S. Customs. And as you know, I have been serving as the U.S. Interdiction Coordinator in addition to my duties as Commandant of the Coast Guard.

The Coast Guard is actively involved in direct support of all five strategic goals of the 1996 National Drug Control Strategy. Our commitment ranges from encouragement for the voluntary efforts of Coast Guard units and personnel to mentor our nation's youth, to a significant allocation of our scarce operational resources to shield our air, land, and sea frontiers from the drug threat.

The first goal of the NDCS is motivating America's youth to reject illegal drugs and substance abuse. Countless Coast Guard personnel are actively engaged in doing just that by participating either individually or in command sponsored programs to provide tutors, mentors, and role models for at-risk young people in our nation's schools. Others are active in community sponsored youth programs such as scouting, and sports leagues. The Coast Guard also directly supports the Naval Sea Cadet program by sponsoring or hosting units and providing training opportunities at operational units. All of these activities provide motivation and help to develop the character of our nation's youth.

The second goal of the NDCS is increasing the safety of America's citizens by substantially reducing drug-related crime and violence. Coast Guard Criminal Investigators work jointly with other federal agents and local agencies on multi-agency task forces such as the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) in several regions of the country. The Coast Guard also provides operational support for task forces in a number of High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas (HIDTAs). We are heavily involved in the Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands HIDTA because of the significant maritime and air smuggling problem in that region. Coast Guard participation in these task forces increases their effectiveness in targeting all levels of trafficking to reduce the flow of drugs to YOUR neighborhoods. The Coast Guard

Intelligence Program directly supports the National Intelligence Community effort to support counternarcotic operations. Our Intelligence Program provides personnel support at the El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC), and the Coast Guard provides key support to other programs as well. These are a few examples of Coast Guard interagency cooperation which increases the efficiency and effectiveness of investigative and intelligence programs to apprehend drug traffickers, seize their drugs, and forfeit their assets.

The third goal of the NDCS is to reduce health, welfare, and crime costs resulting from illegal drug use. Coast Guard Marine Safety programs have expanded and enhanced drug education and prevention strategies in the workplace in direct support of this goal. All applicants for marine related licenses and documents must meet initial chemical testing requirements. During inspections and boardings of commercial vessels, the Coast Guard ensures that companies comply with Drug Free Workplace requirements, including random drug testing. Coast Guard licenses and documents are terminated for individuals who test positive for narcotics.

The Coast Guard is a significant contributor to the implementation of Goal four, shielding America's air, land, and sea frontiers from the drug threat. The Coast Guard continuously patrols the maritime and air approaches to our coastal borders to protect our nation from the danger of illegal drugs. We

accomplish these patrols in addition to our other important missions such as search and rescue, illegal migrant interdiction, defense operations, and the protection and monitoring of our living marine resources. This multi-mission focus enables the Coast Guard to provide effective, efficient, and highly cost effective services for the American taxpayers, and has established the U.S Coast Guard as the role model for numerous international maritime services.

Coast Guard cutters and aircraft are also forward deployed to maintain a continuous commitment in support of Seventh Coast Guard District transit zone operations in the Caribbean as well as Joint Inter-Agency Task Force East (JIATF-E) transit zone operations along the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific coasts of South and Central America.

One of the keys to successful operations in transit zone interdiction operations is intelligence cueing. The Coast Guard continues to support transit zone interdiction efforts focused by intelligence cueing, which is vital to ensuring the effective, efficient use of our assets. A primary goal of the Coast Guard is to ensure that operational commanders are provided accurate, timely intelligence information which will enable them to counter illicit trafficking efforts.

The Coast Guard has taken a proactive role in the development and acquisition of highly accurate narcotics detection devices

such as the SENTOR, IONSCAN, and CINDI drug detection systems. This technology increases the effectiveness of Coast Guard boardings by providing our boarding teams with highly accurate information on the presence and location of concealed narcotics. We are applying improved sensor systems and other advanced technologies to overcome the significant threat which illegal drugs pose to our national security and the very fabric of our society.

The fifth goal of the NDCS is to break foreign and domestic drug sources of supply. The Coast Guard is heavily involved in supply reduction enforcement efforts which attack the transportation networks used by the narcotrafficking organizations.

The Coast Guard works closely with the Department of State to increase source and transit zone nations' capability to conduct more effective drug control efforts. Our close cooperation with Caribbean nations is exceptionally valuable to the region's security. Bilateral Maritime Agreements which facilitate boardings and seizures also provide the Coast Guard with the opportunity to support international maritime forces and provide us with an excellent force multiplier which benefits all parties.

The Coast Guard will continue to work with the State Department to develop counternarcotic agreements with strategic coastal states bordering narcotic trafficking routes. These

agreements facilitate the fluid efforts of counterdrug operations at stopping the trafficking of illicit cargoes through and from coastal nations in the Caribbean and Eastern Pacific maritime regions.

Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachments (LEDETs), one of our most cost effective programs, deploy aboard U.S., British and Netherlands naval vessels, further increasing our presence and capability in narcotics interdiction. We conduct combined operations with Caribbean, Central and South American countries, and participate in coincidental operations with other nations when combined operations are not feasible. During these coincidental operations, both the Coast Guard and host nation forces patrol separately but share tactical information. Our goal is to have these operations lead to long-term, formal law enforcement agreements. Our objective is to make use of intelligence to deploy interdiction assets with the utmost efficiency throughout the transit zone to significantly deter traffickers from using maritime and air routes for transporting illegal drugs.

As part of the Coast Guard's role in implementing the National Drug Control Strategy, HU-25C interceptor aircraft are currently engaged in a long term deployment in support of USSOUTHCOM operations in the source and transit zones, and Coast Guard LEDETs are embarked in US Navy Patrol Craft engaged in a long term mission in support of USSOUTHCOM operations in the source and transit zone littoral regions.

The Coast Guard Reserve Training Center will continue to deploy Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) to source and transit countries. These deployments are funded by the Department of State. Their purpose is to provide training in many Coast Guard mission areas, including maritime law enforcement, port security/safety, maritime environmental protection, and others. In doing so, we are developing credible indigenous forces to contribute to the fight against narcotics trafficking.

The Coast Guard has streamlined its organization to maximize efficiency and reduce costs. By fiscal year 1998, the Coast Guard will have reduced its budget by $400 million and eliminated 4,000 personnel. The Coast Guard workforce in 1997 will be smaller than at any time in the last 30 years. Since fiscal year 1994, the Coast Guard has decommissioned 18 cutters and taken 18 aircraft out of service.

The Coast Guard is the lead agency for maritime drug interdiction, yet the Coast Guard's budget for drug interdiction has gone from a high of $639 million in fiscal year 1990 to a low of $234 million in fiscal year 1994. The President's fiscal year 1997 budget increases Coast Guard expenditures for drug law enforcement by $16.2 million to $346 million.

The situation in the transit zone has changed since the early 1990's. Non-commercial maritime trafficking has replaced much of

the general aviation smuggling employed then. Further, smugglers are no longer easily thwarted by random patrols and boardings. Although that tactic can be effective in deterring some, smugglers are getting smarter and employing advanced technology that makes them harder to sort and tougher to monitor undetected. For example, the accuracy of commercially available GPS allows traffickers to rendezvous with little or no coordinating communications. The key to effective maritime interdiction is cued intelligence and leveraged technologies. Since we can't stop and board every vessel in the transit zone, we need intelligence to sort the bad guys from the vast majority of good guys, and technologically advanced sensors to quickly and efficiently detect, classify, and identify suspect targets.

I urge the Congress to support the President's request for the additional $250 million to "kick-start" the new 1996 NDCS strategy. The Coast Guard's share of the request, $14.6 million, would allow the Coast Guard to continue support to USSOUTHCOM operations in source zones without reducing Coast Guard operations in the Caribbean, increase operational support to key transit routes, and allow the Coast Guard to start implementation of the advanced technology proposals outlined earlier.

The President's fiscal year 1997 budget contains funds for the Coast Guard to conduct counternarcotics activities in support of the 1996 NDCS, assuming no substantial increases in migrant interdiction or other operations are forthcoming that will

require unplanned programming of operational resources. We will be working to increase our effectiveness through technology and process improvements.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before this distinguished Committee. Your support, oversight, and long-term commitment to the national counterdrug effort is commendable. The Coast Guard stands ready to fully support this effort as well. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you, Admiral Kramek.

I want to go back to November 1994, and the time where you got the 70 commanders involved with the drug war together. You've indicated you have done that since then. How would you describe the plan that you are now dealing with and how you react to that plan?

Admiral KRAMEK. What I have done is, every quarter I get them together, along with the joint staff planning team at the Pentagon headed up by Lt. Gen. Hal Estes. Once a quarter we get together for 2 days of looking at the threat, looking at what the smugglers are doing, and reacting to that, and putting our plans together.

We have had to go, because of many of the national security pressures identified here, whether it happens to be a loss of AWACS time, E–3 electronic warfare aircraft, to reductions in budget where, my goodness, the Navy is reduced from over 540 ships down to 340.

So of course there's less ships in the Caribbean with Coast Guard law enforcement detachments on board them to be able to find drug smugglers. We only have two-thirds of the ships left in the Navy, and we have 18 fewer Coast Guard cutters, 18 fewer planes. A lot of these things have been taken out of service. So my effort has been: Focus on the threat; where are we going to get the most bang for the buck?

And instead of what we started out with in the early 1990's as defense in depth, where we were covering the eastern Pacific, as an example, we have had to go to what I call a sector defense and just focus on being very flexible on where the threat is, and we have used intelligence to a high degree.

Where we would have defense in depth with many assets and perhaps using 15 or 20 percent intelligence, we now rely on intelligence for over 80 percent of our operations so that we can focus on what we really know, because we don't have extra aircraft time or radar time or ship time, don't have those assets to go out there and find them.

So intelligence has become a much more important part of this whole operation. And that's what we do at these quarterly meetings, and then I report to the director of ONDCP and let them know how we are doing on that. I advise them, it's time to focus on Puerto Rico, was the last brief I gave them a couple of weeks ago.

Or before that, it's—last year, Peru was the center of gravity. We ought to stop the coca leaves coming up that you saw down there from Peru to Colombia, and we started operation Green Clover, which was successful in that. I started another operation now to continue that on.

So that's how we manage it, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZELIFF. Actually, it was so successful, now we have to deal with some of your assets with the tributaries to the Amazon, and the effort instead of air now is going up through water.

Admiral KRAMEK. And we expected that would happen.

When I was down there, I visited with the Presidents of Bolivia and Peru, and I could see immediately that they would try to fly west—rather, east into Brazil and then up.

We established a school in Bolivia with the help of the State Department. We work for them and the Ambassadors in these coun-

tries. And we have a school in the—in Trinidad, Bolivia, that trained 170 members of the Bolivian Navy, called the Blue Devils, and I met with them and their commander, and they are on the tributaries to the rivers there, trying to interdict drugs already.

We are getting ready to do the same thing right now in Peru. The Ambassador of Peru, Ambassador Adams, has asked us to provide forces. And we work—this isn't just the Coast Guard doing this now. We will provide experts. Special forces will provide experts, work for the Ambassador. SOUTHCOM will coordinate it, because you can't do it without the help of the host country.

Mr. ZELIFF. Right.

Admiral KRAMEK. And they have asked for that help.

So through international training teams, we are already looking at the next move, trying to be proactive as to where the smugglers may move so we can stop them there.

Mr. ZELIFF. We met with the Justice Minister of Brazil yesterday and talked to him about some of the changing patterns and how it affects their country as well, and we obviously have work to do with that country.

But let me ask you this: With the involvement, not only that map over there but looking at our hemisphere, do you think it would be a good idea if we, as a country, took the initiative to have a western hemisphere meeting on the drug threat?

Admiral KRAMEK. Well, I think that's under way and taking place. There have been a couple of lesser meetings.

Two years ago, there was the summit—or a year ago December, the Summit of the Americas at Miami in December, where the President agreed with the President of Mexico to lead up a 32-nation coalition to do exactly what you are suggesting. A plan was put together for that.

We had some problems with Mexico in the meantime because of the devaluation of the peso and some other things, but that effort has been renewed. General McCaffrey has just traveled to Mexico with a high United States delegation. Mexico is now showing a lot of cooperation, but it took a long time diplomatically to put that together because all the nations had to sign the protocol.

Mr. ZELIFF. And the difference, finally the President of Mexico now considers this the No. 1 threat facing their country, and you indicated that you believe that this is our top national security issue, if I heard you right.

Is it—did I hear you say it's——

Admiral KRAMEK. I think certainly it's one of the—one of the top ones.

You know, everybody likes a top national security issue. I think if we were to ask the American people, that they should tell us what it is, and when I visit them, I know what they tell me: Stop drugs from coming into the country; stop illegal migrants from coming into the country; save our lives; keep our oceans and waterways clean. Drugs is usually No. 1. And I would say that's the large majority of the American people. So I listen to them, and that's where I give you that conclusion.

Mr. ZELIFF. I would be happy to throw in, I have just done some polling up in New Hampshire for another project, and I can tell you, drugs—drugs and crime are the No. 1 issue facing everybody

in New Hampshire, and if we are the model for the country, as we usually are every 4 years, I would say that it's probably the No. 1 issue facing every State in the country.

And the thing is, we can go to South America, we can visit with the Coast Guard, the transit zone—and you have some courageous folks these that are putting their lives on the line every day, as DEA is and other agencies of the Federal Government are. But the bottom line is, we come back to Manchester, NH, and the streets of Manchester, and that stuff is coming up there. It's getting sold there, and it's destroying our kids.

I was in a drug-free schools program the other day, and it was nice to see some parents there. And, again, that's been a missing link as well. So it's a tough, tough problem that we are dealing with.

I would like to refer—and before I mention, it's nice to see the chairman of the Subcommittee on Coast Guard, Howard Coble, in the audience.

Mr. Coble, if you have anything you would like to add, please let us know at any time.

On page 50 of the 1996 National Drug Control Strategy, I believe that there is an indication that if we added $300 million to the transit zone we could reduce drugs coming into the United States by approximately 16 percent. Does that make sense for us to do that?

Admiral KRAMEK. There have been some studies that ONDCP did about a year ago. They were never verified. They were only given 4 weeks to do them. But they were studies as to what increase in terms of effectiveness you would have for either a $200 or $500 million increase.

I could tell you this, Mr. Chairman, that whether I met with the commanders or I looked at those studies or I continue to meet with them, the order of magnitude to do something in the transit zone, in the interim period, until the source country strategy takes hold, and I think if it was our money in our wallet and it is—we are all taxpayers—we probably would invest in those source country programs, because you have a product that increases in value 200 times to 1 by the time the leaf is grown until it's sold on the street.

So it really isn't as sensitive to supply-demand market conditions. I mean, there's such a huge markup on it. But if you can stop it inexpensively at the source, we wouldn't need as much investment in the transit zone.

But because they are not robust programs yet, because all of those countries in Latin America and South America really haven't gotten together yet, although they are working in that direction, my advice would be to keep up our defense, a meaningful defense in the transit zone, and it's—it's in the area of a $200 or $300 million increase in the transit zone interdiction budget. That's about where it comes out.

Mr. ZELIFF. This is what I tried to mention in the previous panel of GAO. For small amounts of priority emphasis in the transit zone, small amounts of priority emphasis in the source country programs, we can make things happen, we can make things work.

And so we are not saying that education and demand side programs are wrong. We are just saying that there needs to be a bal-

ance between education, prevention, treatment, interdiction, and source country programs.

I am afraid I have run out of my time.

Mrs. Thurman.

Mrs. THURMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Admiral, since there is a lot of debate, and I know that we are trying to work as well on this additional $250 million that the President has requested, can you give us an indication of how that's going to help us improve the Coast Guard mission?

Admiral KRAMEK. Very little, that is, for the Coast Guard.

I would say that in reviewing what's on that list, it includes all the things that the commanders came up with in the November 1994 meeting. It includes almost all of the things in the ONDCP report, a special report and study they did on it a year ago, same type of things; and it includes items developed through a lot of work by interagency working groups before that came up—came up here.

They worked for days, every agency in Government, to make sure that this just wasn't a shopping list, some sort of bazaar, that we get the most bang for the buck. I can tell you, the things on that list are increases in intelligence, they are increases for electronic warfare AWACS planes by getting a very inexpensive version, P–3 rotodomes planes that Customs operates.

About $14 million of that $250 million is for Coast Guard operations which go to bolster our effort around Puerto Rico and Customs for Operation Gateway. It is the exact type of things that are identified as a weakness in the GAO report in allowing Puerto Rico to be a transshipment point for up to what they mentioned this morning, 28 percent of the cocaine.

I've been recommending we do something about Puerto Rico for over a year and a half. Tomorrow afternoon I will be meeting with the Governor of Puerto Rico here to discuss that further.

So the money that's asked for in that supplemental was to get us started in the right direction on this, to fill exactly the weaknesses that we have seen in reports like this GAO report.

Mrs. THURMAN. So you might take exception to what the GAO said about the accountability of those dollars? I mean, from what I gather, it's—what you are saying here is that to some degree you are filling out the mission that they asked you to do with this extra $250 million.

Admiral KRAMEK. I wouldn't take issue with that. I think they said that each individual agency probably had a plan. I agree with that. We all have to. It's the budgetary process. And the bigger plan is, as we put together all of these threats and campaign plans, if you call them that, they become part of our budget.

Now, each agency, of course, has a different committee. That's where the complication comes, but that's why we have a director of ONDCP. We sent him all of our budgets, and he reviews our budgets to make sure they are sufficient to be able to do their job, given the amount of money that's available.

I think what GAO is saying is, if we made an increased investment in the transit zone, they are not sure how the individual agencies would be able to account for the effectiveness it would give them.

And you mentioned several other reports that had found contrary type of opinions. It has to do with the elasticity of the drug. It has to do with the fact that it doesn't follow normal supply and demand situations, the 200-to-1 figure that I gave you.

One thing is clear to me. Depending on our level of effort, there's anywhere between 40 to on the order of 80, 90, 100 tons a year of cocaine that's stopped in the transit zone. We can't afford not to stop that cocaine, because that will reach the United States and be bad for our kids and be bad for the American public. And I don't think it's a very large investment to be able to do that, comparatively with the total program.

Mrs. THURMAN. Admiral, it's my understanding that maybe 10, 12 years ago, there actually was a number of American companies that had proposed some nonintrusive methods for Customs to check trucks and cargo. Is that still ongoing, or what has happened to that?

Admiral KRAMEK. It's still ongoing. There are research and development projects. The research is complete; the development is complete. We have not only the ability to x ray containers, we have things like the IONSCAN that can look into tanks, fuel oil tanks, that can look through false steel bulkheads. There are special detectors.

The $250 million supplemental asked for funds to increase the numbers of those. There's only a few of those that we have—that we have built. They are not that expensive. But there's a modest amount of money in the 1996 supplemental the President sent up so we can have field kits of those and use that technology. It's developed. We haven't had the funds to be able to buy it.

Mrs. THURMAN. OK. With the number of free trade zones that are existing now, do you believe there are drugs coming in and entering through those trade zones?

Admiral KRAMEK. I think there what we talk about is the susceptibility of drugs coming into Puerto Rico. Why are they coming there? Why do they head toward places like the Virgin Islands?

The Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico are different as far as their Customs zones are concerned. Puerto Rico is included in the Customs waters of the United States. However, I met with the Commissioner of Customs because I was in the process of suggesting it not be, in that we could eliminate Puerto Rico as a transshipment point. Why is Puerto Rico a transshipment point? I think the chairman mentioned that if you are there, you are in New York, you are in St. Louis, not only for drugs but for migrants.

I have got 20,000 Dominicans a year crossing the Mona Pass, trying to—and they are running the drug trade in Puerto Rico, by the way, coming across the Mona Pass into Puerto Rico.

So how do we eliminate Puerto Rico as a transshipment point? I have gotten together with the Commissioner of Customs. The answer is, Operation Gateway that Customs wants to pursue, which will not only look at things coming into Puerto Rico but Commissioner Weise will also start enforcing things leaving Puerto Rico. The law allows that because of its geographic location, with the exception of our commercial aviation and aviation passengers, and we have to look at that.

Mrs. THURMAN. What about in Panama? Is there any indication?

Admiral KRAMEK. In Panama, that has always taken place. We have great cooperation from the Panamanians right now.

Mrs. THURMAN. OK.

Admiral KRAMEK. We have tremendous intelligence activities in Panama that I would need to brief you on separately.

Mrs. THURMAN. OK.

Admiral KRAMEK. And if there's any hope, I had two Panamanian cadets graduate from the Coast Guard Academy yesterday that are going to go down there and be part of the Panamanian Maritime Defense Forces. So I think we are on the right track with that.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Chairman, are we going to have an opportunity for more questions?

Mr. ZELIFF. Yes.

Mrs. THURMAN. OK. Then I will yield my time.

Mr. ZELIFF. Mr. Hastert, you might enlighten us a little bit on the supplemental. I know we have been working on that, and—as well as the budget process overall. If you have a minute, if you would like to do that. I will give you a little extra time if you would like.

Mr. HASTERT. Thank you.

What we are trying to do is to move together and find out what the priorities are, obviously—I didn't know I was going to be a witness; I don't have testimony here, Mr. Chairman—and try to coordinate those priorities so that we come up with a plan.

Of course, part of that is integral to what we are able to—what kind of a plan that we get, a revised plan that we get from the new drug czar, and we are anxiously awaiting that information as well. So it all takes a process.

And as far as a supplemental appropriation, we have to wait to see if there is a supplemental coming forward. But one of the things that we know that the $250 million that the drug czar requested, the P3's are all part of that, and we are very anxious to get that stuff moving and on the ground, and that's why we have tried to coordinate this.

Mr. ZELIFF. But we are certainly committed to the list that's in there.

Mr. HASTERT. Absolutely.

Mr. ZELIFF. I just want to make sure that no one had any doubts about our commitment.

Mr. HASTERT. And I appreciate you coming here today and spending some time with us.

Out on the track, we do—when you talk about Colombia, we do have some problems in Colon in the free-trade zone there—not Colombia, I am sorry—in——

Admiral KRAMEK. Panama.

Mr. HASTERT. In Panama. I know that's really out of your jurisdiction, but it's not completely. A lot of some of that ends up on ships obviously in moving through. So——

Admiral KRAMEK. I would agree with you greatly. The *Nataly I* that was seized came through the Panama Canal, and all that stuff may or may not have been loaded. But the point I would make is 4 or 5 years ago, we didn't have a lot of surveillance and intel-

ligence and cooperation. It is getting better, but it is still a major threat area.

Mr. HASTERT. Intelligence really is the point. There is no magic way to find out where that is; it is just the old-fashioned way of finding out from people who know. I would encourage certainly your efforts, and others', to pursue on the intelligence side.

Let's talk about dollars and cents a little bit. When we see—we talked about source countries. I think there certainly is a parallel; I think you made that parallel. When the effort is reduced in source countries, we see more of that product being transshipped, and of course, that is in your bailiwick. You really, I believe—I think I hear from your testimony, if you can get it when it is cheap, and it is coke and paste instead of crack cocaine, it is an easier and cheaper and more effective way to do it; is that correct?

Admiral KRAMEK. It is not only correct, but we have just proven that in Operation Green Clover. We ran—and I need to say with tremendous cooperation from Bolivia, Peru, Venezuela, Colombia, because it takes their regional cooperation to make these things happen. The United States could never do it; it is their country and their land. I was able to work with them and provide them information, so they could take action, stop the flow of drugs between Peru and Colombia. They drove the price of cocoa leaves down below the price of bananas, pineapples, and soybeans, so that alternate crops in those countries were getting more money and the farmers stopped growing cocoa.

That was the President of Peru's initiative to do that. We were only able to do that until December 15; then I had to stop that operation.

Now, the supplemental request that we have asked for would help sustain that operation full-time and maybe drive them through the rivers. That is harder when you are on those rivers, if you have seen South America and all of those rivers in the jungle. Then to work with those countries again, we have to work with our friends from Brazil, Colombia, and Peru to stop the Wolverine system from traffic.

Mr. HASTERT. Two questions on that point. Venezuela historically has not always been a transshipment point. As the heat is put on Colombia, and the air traffic into Peru, it seems to me that Venezuela has become more and more a target of both manufacturing, and especially through the riverine system and movement up in the air corps.

Is that what you find also?

Admiral KRAMEK. I think that is a logical assumption, I find that only in a minor way now based on our threat analysis. I will say, we worked with the Venezuelan navy, and—the Coast Guard works with them, and we have trained them, at least on the interdiction side, out to 50 miles in how to do that. The hard part will be to get Venezuela, Colombia, Peru to work together so that they can do that without our support, so they can take ownership for this; and we are working in that direction. It takes a while and a tremendous diplomatic effort by Ambassador Gelbard to do that.

Mr. HASTERT. I understand. As a matter of fact, in a conversation with the Marine Corps, who is also very interested in this issue, said recently they just visited in the riverine area and they

need 24-wheelers to be able to pursue and be effective in that area. Do you find that also?

Admiral KRAMEK. I find that to be—I am not sure about the magnitude.

I did talk to General Krulak about that at the CINC's conference when he came back from the trip. The situation is the same as Bolivia, the same as Peru, in that case. They are moving to the rivers, which means they are moving east to try to avoid the radar net that we have put up through the air bridge corridors.

This is how we work together jointly, because the Marines and the Army and the Coast Guard provide to CINC's, SOUTHCOM, the forces we need to train those nations in conducting riverine operations themselves; we show them how to do it. They are at our schools now in Yorktown, VA. We help them pick out the right equipment and really the in-country teams and the Ambassadors work these with countries in cooperation to do it.

So, again, it needs regional coordination; and I agree, we can be of greater assistance in training them to do that.

Mr. HASTERT. Admiral, the President's request for source countries is $123 million below what it was in 1992. How does that impact the ability for us to stop this movement of material?

Admiral KRAMEK. I am not aware that the President's request in the 1997 budget is less for source countries. I thought it was more.

Mr. HASTERT. Since 1992.

Admiral KRAMEK. Oh, since 1992. Well, it has been my experience, sir, that in almost every year—at least the 2 years I have been interdiction coordinator—we have certainly asked for enough State Department funds, which are the source country funds, to do this, as well as DOD funds.

The requests have come up, and for various reasons, they have not been approved. I am not saying they are not approved by Congress; they have not been approved on the Hill for whatever reason, the same reason the Coast Guard budget was reduced $100 million a year for the last 3 years. So has the Department of Defense budget, significantly, in source country programs; and so has the INL and the State Department. And I can tell you, without those funds, it is impossible to have a viable source country program, and that is what you are seeing in the GAO statistics.

Mr. HASTERT. It is also, I understand, the 1997 budget that is $30 million for Peru that has been frozen in alternative development. Do you have any idea why?

Admiral KRAMEK. I have no information on that.

Mr. HASTERT. Thank you. I would like to come back with another round of questions.

Mr. ZELIFF. Mr. Cummings.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Admiral, I wish that my constituents could have an opportunity to hear you and just listen to you and your sincerity. I wish they knew—I represent a district which is ravaged by drugs, but I applaud you for what you are trying to do.

As I am sitting here, I am just curious, if you had a wish list, what—and I know you must think about this, what would you want? I mean, I know what you have said, but here you are; you are fighting every day trying to protect this country. What would that be? What would you want?

Admiral KRAMEK. I will answer on behalf of all law enforcement officers, if I may, only because I meet with them once in a while. We have to reduce the demand for drugs in this country. All law enforcement officers, including the Coast Guard, would agree, because we have been chasing smugglers since 1790, no matter what they are smuggling; sometimes it is illicit stuff from Europe, sometimes it is rum. If you were to read the books on the rum war at sea, it is not too much different than the coke wars at sea, as far as what takes place.

We need to reduce demand, but in order to have the demand programs work, they take time and effort. At the same time, we need to disrupt the line of supply, so we don't leave our land-sea-air borders open because they can keep raining cocaine on us to meet the demand in our country.

So what would I want as a wish list? I think I would wish that we would cooperate together in great harmony, all agencies on both sides of the aisle, in bringing this strategy to life, because I think that is what we need to do.

As far as a wish list in the interdiction zone, in the transit zone, I think we need to keep our defenses up there until we get the next team ready in the source country and until we see some results in our demand programs, because you can't afford to leave that border open. So I would only ask for the things that we have asked for in our budgets and in the supplemental, to keep some stoppers in place there, to keep interdicting those drugs.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I see the wonderful people sitting behind you, and I was just wondering, when you see—you talked about the demand and trying to decrease that. I was just wondering, do you think that affects the morale of your people when they are out there, and they are able to accomplish some of the things you are able to accomplish; but on the other hand, see the demand increasing or——

Admiral KRAMEK. I will let them answer when they testify, but they will perhaps tell you—and I have asked them to tell you—sea stories. Because that is what they are doing; they are in the—they are at sea trying to conduct maritime law enforcement, which not only includes drugs, but you will hear them maybe talk about their frustration.

I have a search and rescue case. I have migrants coming across the Windward Passage. Here comes a drug ship. What do I do? What are my priorities?

Or I am in the plane, and I am tracking someone, and I have intelligence that says, here comes a smuggler. And I follow that smuggler to the end game, but in this Caribbean nation where they are getting ready to land, they haven't cooperated with us, and there isn't any end game, so what have I really accomplished?

Meanwhile, I read the newspapers and demand is going up, so what have I really done?

Their frustration, that they may—that you may hear from them is, in their effort in the transit zone, sometimes there isn't any connectivity with the end game or the source country; or the lack of resources in intelligence doesn't allow them to use the tools they have been given to do their job.

Mr. CUMMINGS. In your opinion, if we did certain things, is it possible, do you believe, that we could win this war? You talk about winning other wars, all kinds of wars, and we spend a lot of money.

I am just curious. Can we win this war if we put forth the necessary resources to win it?

Admiral KRAMEK. I don't think it is necessarily a resource issue. We can only win if we have the will as a nation to win, and we are all together doing it, and we have a plan. I am convinced General McCaffrey is on the right track. I mean, by gosh, he is a general he knows how to put together campaign plans. He has to put together a 10-year plan with a 5-year budget and say, OK, this is what we have to do. We are going to keep the things that work and discard the things that don't.

I would say when we get these plans, though—and we all deal with budgets; I am dealing with three budgets at the same time—we have to be very flexible with this plan. You have to be able to adapt to—these folks, in less than 24 hours, can change their modus operandi. We have—we need a will to win, to work together. If we are split or divided or separated in any way, we won't have a chance to win it.

Mr. CUMMINGS. In the Caribbean—I've visited the Caribbean quite a bit on vacation. All of these countries seem very small. What are we doing with regard to them? That seems like it would be a kind of controllable situation. You have a lot of very poor people. I am just wondering what is happening.

Admiral KRAMEK. I can tell you exactly. I think your perception on that, sir, is exactly correct. The Coast Guard, operating in the Caribbean, we have our Greater Antilles section operating out of Puerto Rico. For years we have run a search-and-rescue network out of the entire Caribbean basin. That was the basis, in the mid eighties and late eighties for a regional security program throughout all of the Caribbean nations, over 18 of them, in that those search-and-rescue operation centers really became drug communications centers as well.

Now we have gone one step beyond that, a majority, in my opinion, working together with USACOM, General Sheehan, and working together with the State Department Ambassador Gelbard and all of those consuls and Ambassadors down there. We have now signed with 15 of the 18 Caribbean nations we deal with memorandums of agreement that allow us to enter their territorial waters and enforce United States law, and pretty soon we will have those for air rights as well on many of our ships; and we have their citizens and regional security personnel. In the Bahamas, as an example, it is typical for our OPBAT helicopters to have a regional security policeman from the Bahamas and a DEA agent operating in conjunction with Bahamian national law to interdict drugs.

So we work together. I have law enforcement detachments on French, British, and Dutch ships, who are protecting all of their possessions now in the Caribbean that weren't there 2 or 3 years ago; and we work like a NATO task force. In fact, we use NATO operating orders—a little difficult with the French sometimes, but they do cooperate because it all has to be classified. I have British ships with Coast Guard law enforcement detachments seizing

smugglers running the fast boats out of Colombia. It is an international effort. Cooperation is coming together.

Now, the amount of resources—they need now three or four Boston Whalers, properly trained counternarcotics police forces, which we bring to our schools here; or when we send maritime training groups to their countries. It takes a while to develop that. I have seen great growth in that, and I am encouraged.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you, Mr. Cummings. I appreciate your concern for the communities you represent, and we have an informal drug breakfast, which we would like to invite you to become a part of, with Charlie Rangel and others. And we have been able to work through a bipartisan effort and a commitment; and our heart goes out to—and I can't think of his name—from the Virgin Islands.

We are not winning this war. This thing is out of control. We haven't declared war. And I hear the Admiral's comments on allocation of scarce resources and 50 Government agencies and thousands and thousands of communities that we are trying to work with. This is a monster. We need to do it in a bipartisan way and, yes, we need to do it long term, a 5-year financial plan, 10-year commitment. And I think I asked General McCaffrey, are we at a point where we can do as John Kennedy did in 1960 and make a commitment? And I don't know whether you would join me in this effort.

Can the United States, will the United States say, we will win the drug war? John F. Kennedy said, We will put a man on the moon, and we did it. We have the ability and we have the commitment, and I think you said, Do we have that gut level of commitment to do this?

I will ask you a question. Are we winning the drug war on the basis of current policy?

Admiral KRAMEK. We haven't won yet. We are on the path to winning.

When I take a look at—when I started this, which was in 1975, I remember exactly, I was sent underway on a ship and I was told to go down to Miami to start Operation Buccaneer, which was the first drug war with ships to stop—marijuana was the big threat in those days—just some cocaine from coming into the United States.

As I arrived in Miami, I met with DEA, I met with Customs. We shielded the windows of the room, closed the curtains; and they put up the secret sign and they said, how do you think we ought to operate this thing? And I said, I thought you would tell me.

They said, We don't have any intelligence. We are really not sure what to do. I said, Why don't we barricade the eastern side of the Bahamas?

They said, That sounds pretty good. How many ships and planes are you going to need? And we went out and did that. We had hundreds of tons of marijuana unloading in the Keys off the Florida coast. People were killing each other in the streets of Miami.

Mr. Chairman, we have come a long way from that. Over the last 5 or 6 years, we have a 50-percent decrease in the use of cocaine in this country. We have had a tremendous decrease in the use of drugs over the last 6 or 7 years. I am aware of some of the increases in marijuana use in some of the schools, and I think that is notable and I think we should be very concerned about that.

We are also aware that a lot of marijuana is grown in the United States and not coming in from the countries we are trying to get into. I think we are winning, and I think by virtue of your committee and by virtue of the President taking action and escalating this to one the highest national security issues, in his words—and you and I attended General McCaffrey's swearing-in together, and we heard him say that and we heard him make a major speech in Connecticut yesterday—the fact that we are revamping the National Drug Control Strategy and the office of the Director. General McCaffrey is working very hard now to hire the people that have been authorized and appropriated for him to do.

We are headed in the right direction, and we continue to head there. What we are really talking about is, there are some gaps, there are some weaknesses. Are we moving fast enough as a nation? Can we move this system we have in this process to be able to stop these smugglers, and are we getting the most effectiveness for our money? Our system that we are doing now is exploring that, and I take it, it is very worthwhile.

Mr. ZELIFF. I would just like to—the data that I have seen indicates that cocaine use, as well as all drug use, in the last 3 years particularly, is significantly up—all ages, all drugs. I don't know whether you want to comment on that.

Admiral KRAMEK. I would not agree on that on cocaine use. I think cocaine use among casual users is dramatically down; I think cocaine use among hard-core users is probably the same, it might even be a little up.

The thing that I think disturbs us the most is, why are drugs a national security issue? It is a national security issue because such a great amount of crime, whether it be violent crime or other crime, there is such a great amount of people we have to incarcerate there because of the drug problem. One would only have to look at the tables in the appendix to this to see how much we pay for prison systems in our counternarcotics effort or anything else, and that is all necessary.

In my view, we shouldn't be taking from any of these areas to try to make interdiction better. It is a balanced approach. If we think we need a little bit more there, that is why the President sent up a supplemental and why we have been asked in our 1997 budgets to include funds to increase and match that. That is why I just don't, pro forma, ask for your support. The plan is there, the information is there for the tools to help us keep winning the war.

Mr. ZELIFF. I just want to get off of this, but on page 14 of the 1996 strategy it indicates that juvenile—maybe I should have been more specific—use of cocaine is dramatically up.

Basically, let me ask you this. What we are fighting for—we are working on a $15.1 billion budget for 1997, and we are trying to incorporate what you need, as well as what we need, for source country, as well as prevention, as well as education, and as well as treatment. We are trying to come up with that balance.

In our judgment—and I will ask Mr. Hastert; he may want to comment, too—in our judgment, we feel that interdiction and source country programs are not getting the effort, the balance, the resource allocation that they need. They are small base numbers

and even though there is an increase of 8.5 percent, in the small base, it is still not where it needs to be in order to get the job done.

We are talking probably, round numbers, $100 million, we are talking in this book here. What would happen if you had $300 million? Maybe you can just comment in relative degrees. Does it matter, or should we give up our fight to give you the assets you need?

Admiral KRAMEK. I think we need to look at the chart. I can tell you that 3 or 4 years ago, we did defense in depth; we were at least able to cover the geographic area. The intelligence wasn't as good. A lot of money that was spent in the early 1990's was spent to buy assets which we now have.

I have, as an example, nine specialized Falcon jet aircraft with F–16 radar and special sensors there to go find the drug traffickers and intercept. I am not able to operate them all because my budget has been reduced. So we had sea-based aerostats, we had more frigates. We had more Coast Guard cutters, we had more AWACS time.

We had resources in the eastern Pacific where those 250 metric tons come up. There is nothing there today because there aren't enough forces to put there. That is why we use intelligence a little more.

But the point is, the request that we made was to try to meet those threats in a wise way, that are intelligence driven, that are not just bizarre new things, building on the experience we have had and the assets that we have had before in the organization that we have had.

There are some things over in the eastern Pacific this morning, because we couldn't stand that threat anymore. I have got a Coast Guard cutter all the way from the eastern United States over in the eastern Pacific right now, on the other side of the Panama Canal. It is hard to get fuel there, by the way, and I will just give this to you as an aside; we can't afford the oiler to go with us anymore.

We have got operations in Bosnia, in the Middle East, in the Persian Gulf; the Navy oil needs to go where the Navy ships are. I can't get an oiler. I have got Ambassador Gelbard negotiating with Mexico for me so we can get fuel in Mexico without 30 days' notice. There is a very tough logistics problem, and it is a very large area.

Mr. ZELIFF. Wouldn't we, as we significantly increase the threat to the No. 1 threat, if it is No. 1—wouldn't that change in priority allocation? If national security in the drug issue and drugs and crimes became the No. 1 national security threat, then those allocation of resources in the priorities that we place on them probably would change.

Admiral KRAMEK. I will only speak as Commandant of the Coast Guard, if I may. When I testified before one of the committees this year, I told them my No. 1 priority in maritime law enforcement, absent the mass migration from Cuba and Haiti—again, we don't have that now; we are interdicting them every day and bringing them back. Absent a security threat of that magnitude is counternarcotics. I asked for my 1997 budget to be increased a certain amount in my opening statement to be able to cover that and take care of Puerto Rico and take care of these other areas that we have asked for.

Now, are the Appropriations Committee going to appropriate those funds? I would hope so.

Mr. ZELIFF. How much is that increase?

Admiral KRAMEK. In the overall Coast Guard budget, about 9 or 10 percent of my entire budget is counternarcotics. I asked for that to be increased about 12 percent. The slight increase was about $30 or $40 million, as you know, Mr. Chairman, and, as you know, there isn't any new money.

We have about 15 or 20 percent more work to do than we are able to accomplish. Again, I go back to allocating scarcity of resources. I have upped the drug threat based on everything we have talked about and are taking resources away now from fisheries enforcement—and you know what the state of our fisheries are—and from migrant enforcement in order to concentrate some more on drugs.

Again, I hope the Haitians will stay at home and the Cubans will stay at home and the fisheries be replenished.

Those are the type of decisions that we have for other agencies that are different but the same type of pressure and decisionmaking.

Mr. ZELIFF. Mrs. Thurman.

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Chairman, I don't really have any more questions. I would like to have the opportunity to submit mine. I know the hour is getting late and we are probably going to have another vote. I would certainly like to have the opportunity to hear from our last panel and hear what their experience has been. I think that is important.

Admiral, we thank you.

He laid out a lot work that's been done, still need some things to happen. I look forward to the time when we can have this closed meeting to hear some more things. I think it will put many questions to rest, and it seems to me things are moving much quicker and faster than some of us had anticipated.

We appreciate your hard work and of those with you, and we thank you for being here again today.

Mr. ZELIFF. Mr. Hastert.

Mr. HASTERT. Very quickly, a couple of questions. I was not here for the very first part of your presentation, but this GAO report was of course on the eastern Caribbean.

You have said previously that you had to move your resources around to try to match what you think the greatest narco-threat was, so that leaving the eastern Pacific basically naked and coming in from time to time is a decision that is tough to make, but you have to do that. Is that correct?

Admiral KRAMEK. The eastern Caribbean—the GAO looked at it from a tactical standpoint, an area of choke points, where you can set up an area of surveillance and detection and monitoring and choke them off in the passes, if you will.

The eastern Pacific, while not appearing on that chart, is four times as large with no choke points. When we got to *Nataly I,* it was 850 miles west of Peru, and without intelligence we never would have found that vessel out there because we don't patrol 850 miles.

Mr. HASTERT. What about the western Caribbean? What types of—you know, with 70 percent of the product going up through Mexico and some of it slipping off, especially in the eastern part of Mexico.

Admiral KRAMEK. I am glad you asked that question. If we go to that chart, we will see that we have about 60 metric tons of cocaine moving up in the, what I would call the western Caribbean up off the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico.

To me, it is kind of like the source country strategy. I mentioned defense in depth before. You stop them at the starting point as close as you can. So if you can't stop the leaves from being transported to Colombia and cocaine sent to the United States, then you try to stop it right where it departs the coast. You don't want it to get to Mexico. Then you have to build a national line across the Mexican border 2,000 miles long to stop it from going in, with a whole bunch of border patrol acts to do that.

We are not guarding the eastern or western coast of Mexico very well because there are no resources to do that. That is why General McCaffrey went to Mexico to meet with the Mexicans on how we can cooperate in order to do that so we don't have to deal with the border issues.

Mr. HASTERT. Sixty or seventy tons of cocaine leaves and goes up through the western Caribbean. Where does it end up? In Miami, or New Orleans, or where, or anywhere?

Admiral KRAMEK. Yes. Los Angeles, New Orleans, Houston, Miami, and then distributed through various networks in the United States.

Mr. HASTERT. Also then you mentioned that one of the frustrations, especially in the eastern Caribbean, is if one of your planes spots a trafficker and follows it and all of a sudden it lands in a Caribbean nation which has been taken over, are you assuming those countries have been taken over by narcotics——

Admiral KRAMEK. No, I am not. They don't have the resources for an end game. I think Mr. Cummings mentioned that he has visited many of them.

I can tell you that the regional security forces usually consist of a dozen people with a couple of Boston Whalers and a Cessna aircraft.

Mr. HASTERT. Are a number of countries being taken over politically with narcotic money?

Admiral KRAMEK. I think we see some corruption, and our intelligence indicates there are difficulties. I really can't answer that in open session, sir.

Mr. HASTERT. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZELIFF. I think this concludes this panel. Thank you for your commitment on this, what we really believe to be our Nation's No. 1 security threat. Thank you.

Admiral KRAMEK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZELIFF. And if the next panel, after the Admiral clears—if you would come forward.

By way of introduction, the third panel will be Commander Arthur Brooks, Commanding Officer, the U.S. Coast Guard Cutter

Seneca; and Lt. Kristine Horvath, Aircraft Commander of the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station, Miami, FL; Lt. Glenn Gebele——

Lieutenant GEBELE. Gebele, sir.

Mr. ZELIFF [continuing]. Aircraft Commander of the U.S. Coast Guard Air Station, Clearwater, FL; Lt. Greg Sanial, Commanding Officer, U.S. Coast Guard Cutter *Attu.*

We appreciate you being here. As you can see, we have a process where we are just trying to find out what is going on, what resources you need in the effort to help us put together the plan.

You heard your admiral; you heard the GAO studies on the transit zone. We have been down working with you folks. We met with you yesterday. We have a tremendous pride in what you stand for and the uniform that you wear and what you are all about. We also know that you are putting your lives on the line, and so I think it is good that we get a different perspective, we get it at the very highest part of the Coast Guard, and now we are at the working level. Although Admiral Kramek is at the working level as well, we will get a different perspective, and this is good and healthy.

If you can, condense your testimony into about 5 minutes. We will accept the balance of your testimony in writing for the record.

Please proceed.

STATEMENTS OF COMDR. ARTHUR BROOKS, COMMANDING OFFICER, U.S. COAST GUARD CUTTER *SENECA;* LT. KRISTINE HORVATH, AIRCRAFT COMMANDER, U.S. COAST GUARD AIR STATION, MIAMI, FL; LT. GLENN GEBELE, AIRCRAFT COMMANDER, U.S. COAST GUARD AIR STATION, CLEARWATER, FL; AND LT. GREG SANIAL, COMMANDING OFFICER, U.S. COAST GUARD CUTTER *ATTU*

Commander BROOKS. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee.

I am Commander Arthur Brooks, the commanding officer of the Coast Guard Cutter *Seneca,* a 270 cutter, medium-endurance cutter, home port in Boston, MA. It is my distinct pleasure to appear before you this afternoon to tell you what the 104 men and women on board the Coast Guard Cutter *Seneca* do for you and for the citizens of our country, especially in counternarcotics operations and drug transit zones, but in other missions.

Generally, our method of operation is to leave Boston and conduct patrols that range from 7 to 9 weeks in duration. We will generally have an embarked aviation detachment on board with an HH–65 or HH–60 helicopter, and we will go somewhere and we will attempt to interdict, board, and determine compliance through inspection, by American law, on all vessels, both United States and foreign. This requires us to operate essentially on a 24-hour-a-day basis, and it requires us to conduct boardings in all sea states, in all weathers, all times of day and night.

Even though *Seneca* is a Boston-based cutter, during the high migrant years of 1991 to 1994, *Seneca* operated almost exclusively in the Caribbean, primarily for migrant interdiction, and this was capped with the operations Able Manner and Operation Able Vigil, meaning the large migrant exodus in the summer of 1994 first from Haiti, then from Cuba.

I will tell you that one of the most significant days of my life and a day I will remember forever was the first day on scene for Able Vigil, meaning 30 miles off the north coast of Cuba, north of Haiti, on a clear, bright day. All you could see was hundreds of rafts with anywhere from 10 to 12, down to 1 person in an inner tube.

For a 20-hour period we interdicted 45 boats or rafts and embarked 345 people, literally saving their lives. I know as the sun set and got dark, it was like little water bugs coming from the horizon, and all you could hear were cries in the darkness for help from people who did not understand how hazardous sea travel really is.

During that particular patrol, *Seneca* rescued or assisted over 1,000 people. And in the last 2 years in operations, like a large Haitian migrant interdiction under horrible conditions at Hawks Nest Cay in the Bahamas, a sinking Ukrainian freighter 1,500 miles in the North Atlantic in the middle of December in some of the worst weather I have ever seen, *Seneca* has arrested or assisted almost 2,000 people.

Turning to counternarcotics, we were one of the first 270's to embark HH–60 aircraft and to use 110 foot patrol boats in a combined pouncer package in the Greater Antilles section off Puerto Rico.

In a classic case, we were able, through intelligence, to position ourselves in the patrol boats. We get the track data from the interdicting aircraft. We launched the HH–60 about 2200—10 p.m. They would take off and fly to intercept the tracks, hop the airdrop when the airplane actually drops the drugs to a go-fast boat, and our HH–60 was able to chase this boat in the British Virgin Islands. The British Virgin Island authorities were able to get the bust, do the seizure, and arrest the people involved. That's a good success sorry.

Currently, *Seneca* spends about half of its time in New England doing fisheries enforcement and half its time doing drug enforcement in the Caribbean. Our last patrol, we spent 3 weeks in the Windward Pass, and the missions were to interdict migrants and drugs.

We were kind of torn, because most the time we were there alone. We had only our own embarked helo aboard, and the choice for me was, if I spent my time north of Haiti where the principal migrant traffic was, I wasn't watching the coastal freighters and the small boats transit in with drugs through the Windward, if I went into the main Windward to look for drugs, and I wasn't able to watch migrants coming the other way. So you compromise. You go one way and send your helo the other and do the best you can to cover the Windward Passage between Cuba and Haiti, which is a significant maritime highway.

After 3 weeks in the Windward, I spent another 2 weeks in the Greater Antilles section. During my in-brief there, we were told that drugs was the No. 1 mission. Migrants, of course, from the Mona Pass were No. 2, and search and rescue was third until there was a case. And once people are in distress at sea, drowning, dying, or lost, well, that becomes No. 1, because we have to respond to that; there is an immediate threat there.

One day I will tell you about. On the 2nd of May, I was operating with Mr. Sanial on the *Attu*. We were doing three cases at once near St. Croix. We were trying to find an overdue civilian aircraft

that had gone from St. Croix to Dominica and was believed lost. We had intelligence of an airdrop south of Point Tuna, which is the southeastern corner of Puerto Rico, and we also had intelligence of a mother ship operating south of St. Croix about 40 to 50 miles. So in a very busy day and night we responded with every resource we had.

Customs was there with aircraft, DEA was there, other countries were involved. The *Groves,* the U.S. naval vessel, came over to help, to exhaust all of our intelligence. Unfortunately, we didn't find anything. But that is the kind of work we do—several helo authorities, boat authorities, crashing around in the dark at night, trying to find these people and bring them to task.

I would like to thank you for this opportunity to appear before you and talk about my people and the hard work they do, and I would be happy to answer any questions from the committee.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you, Commander.

Anyone else like to make an opening?

Commander BROOKS. Yes, sir, I think they all have a brief statement.

Lieutenant SANIAL. My name is Lt. Greg Sanial. I am the Commanding Officer of the Coast Guard Cutter *Attu,* which is home ported in San Juan, PR. It is a 110-foot ship with 16 crewmen on board and is capable of up to 30 knots. Our primary mission is drug and migrant law enforcement in the area around Puerto Rico.

Due to the high pace of operations in that area, my ship operates at 135 percent of the standard for other cutters of her class and has done this for the last several years. This has taken a significant toll on my ship and my crew because of, No. 1, the time away from families and friends but also the increased maintenance demands operating at these higher levels.

As an example of how busy we were recently, we had had two migrant cases in a 24-hour period. That was in the Mona Passage. After returning the Dominicans to the Dominican Navy, we returned to San Juan, PR to refuel. After only being there for 12 hours, we got underway for another mission. While underway, there was some intelligence from DEA that was passed through the Coast Guard command center.

A U.S. Navy E–2 aircraft was in the area and searched without success. However, a U.S. Customs airplane proceeded to the area and, using forward-looking infrared radar, was able to detect a target that matched the description described by intelligence. We were diverted and proceeded at night in a darkened ship in 6-foot seas, crashing around, and arrived on scene about an hour and a half later.

The Customs aircraft was able to vector us in to a darkened ship, to the unlit vessel using the forward-looking infrared radar. We were never able to detect the vessel with our radar, and only when we were about 100 yards away, proceeding at speeds near 28 knots, were we able to actually see the vessel. That was with night vision goggles.

We then lit the vessel up with our spotlights, and a 40-foot fiberglass vessel which had proceeded from Colombia then stopped, and the people on board commenced throwing large bales overboard. We quickly launched our small boat, recovered the bales out of the

water, and stood by the vessel. They claimed to be a Colombian registered vessel.

We then—that was passed up through our chain of command, and Colombia refuted the claim of registry. At that point, we were able to treat the vessel as stateless, and we conducted a boarding. During the board of this small vessel, we located several more bales. In total, we recovered 2,100 pounds of cocaine worth approximately $20 million on the streets of America and arrested five people.

The highlight of this case, I would like to point out, was the interagency cooperation that was evident. We had DEA information, Customs aircraft, Navy aircraft, and a Coast Guard ship all reacted. This intelligence was both accurate and actionable for an apprehension in the area.

Also, this case highlights the need for better sensors on my class of ship. Without the help from the aircraft, we would have never found this vessel even with the intelligence because, needing to get within 100 yards in the big ocean, we just would not have been able to do that.

Finally, I think this case highlights we are having some success in the interdiction of drugs in the Puerto Rico area. It is a significant battle, but I think this case highlights that when we do work together we can be successful.

And thank you for your time, sir.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you for your testimony.

Lieutenant Horvath.

Lieutenant HORVATH. My name is Lt. Kristine Horvath. I am an HU–25 Falcon pilot stationed at Air Station Miami. I, too, would like to thank you for the opportunity to come here and share with you some of our experiences in drug interdiction.

The aircraft that I fly is a twin-engine modified business jet. I know we had the opportunity to bring some of you down and show you it in operation. It has been modified specifically for drug interdiction with the same radar the F–16 uses for intercept. In addition, we have a forward-looking infrared heat detector which permits us to do all-weather, all-night operations.

As an operator in the field, I can tell you that the money allocated here in Washington directly impacts my ability to do my job. I fly an outstanding aircraft with an outstanding crew, but even we are not good enough to be in two places at once.

Air Station Miami used to have a complement of 11 Falcon jets. We now have six that we are able to use. Four of those airplanes must stay in Miami in order to meet the search and rescue and law enforcement commitments that we have at home. That leaves us with two aircraft that we are able to deploy for drug interdiction.

In order to support the interdiction efforts in the source and transit zones in Central and South America with SOUTHCOM, we had to remove our two assets from the transit zone in the Caribbean. This is a tangible effect. Last summer we launched our jets 28 times to intercept suspected narcotraffickers. This summer, those targets will still be there but we simply don't have the funds to provide the jets to answer the call.

In addition, as Lieutenant Sanial said, he was fortunate to have the cooperation and an asset there from Customs, but we need to

be there as well, because if Customs is unable to respond, we need to be there in order to answer the call from the ships.

My second concern is that when I can be out there and I can have the aircraft on scene, I need to have the equipment to do the right job. When we are operating with SOUTHCOM, we are the only aircraft that is not equipped with satellite communications capability. On numerous occasions we have had to compromise our covert posture just in order to get an accurate position of a bogey from our controlling agency.

In addition, when I am going to the very challenging scenario of a night intercept, I need to have the entire attention of my crew focused on the task at hand. We all need to be able to concentrate on locating, identifying, and tracking the suspect and not on dealing with the frustrations of poor communications.

Also, an issue near and dear to my heart and to that of any pilot: We need to know, if we are in trouble, we need to know we can pass our position with the absolute certainty that someone will be receiving it at the other end. I have full faith in the search and rescue abilities of my comrades, but I prefer not to have to put that to the test. Satellite communications would give us the capability to receive and transmit information both reliably and securely.

There is no doubt in my mind that your support here makes it possible for me to do a better job out there.

Thank you.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you very much.

Lieutenant.

Lieutenant GEBELE. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman. I am Lt. Glenn Gebele, and I appreciate the opportunity to address you today.

I am an HH–60 helicopter pilot in Clearwater, FL, and we deploy to the Caribbean on the back of cutters and also into the Bahamas arena for the Operation Bahamas, Turks and Caicos. We call it OPBAT. All the time we have four helos deployed in the Bahamas. We have two different sites with two on alert status at all times. Depending on Intel, we either fly routine patrols or patrols are Intel driven. We don't have Intel, then our constructive use of our aircraft is definitely degraded.

Almost—the difference between—the unique thing about the Bahamas in the transit zone is, it is an end game of its own. In order to transit to the United States, they will bring it in, drop it in the Bahamas, move it between the islands, then find the shortest way to get it into southeast United States.

We do an end game as part of the transit zone in OPBAT, with Lieutenant Horvath. She flies the Falcon. They will be tracking a lot of these tracks that come up from Colombia or wherever in South America, and, with their help, they try to arrange—get and idea of where it is going to go into the Bahamas, and we try to get everybody in one place and meet them people and have an end game there.

A lot of times the track will be picked up. If we have an AEW asset up, that is the best way to pick up the track. If they have an AEW asset south of Cuba and they pick him up and they have a track, everybody gets prearranged in their sites in the Bahamas,

wait for them to come into the area to make the drop to the pickup boat.

AEWS tracks them up to Cuba. When it goes into the Cuban airspace, you have to pick him up when he comes out the other side, because the geographic boundaries of us not being able to overfly Cuba, if you don't have an AEW asset on the north side, the early warning—airborne early warning system like the AWACS or E–2 or the P–3—the Custom's P–3, they get lost in the Cuban airspace.

So everybody will be sitting there all primed and ready for them to show you, and he never pops up. He either gets spooked and flies down in Cuba and leaves a couple hundred miles away or he goes to a completely different area than we thought we were tracking him to.

So without an AEWS on the north side to pick him back up, we have expended all of this energy, time, and money on putting these assets in the right place to do the right thing, and if we don't have the AEWS on the north side, then we can't finish the end game. So it is getting to be very frustrating.

I have been flying out there for 3 years now, and we spend a lot of time—I spend, on the average, at least 3 to 4 months a year down in the OPBAT arena. I spend a lot of time sitting around waiting for something to happen, and it all has to do with whether we pick the tracks up or not.

If we don't have any aircraft airborne that has the ability to pick up those tracks, then we are not going to have anything to do. We will be sitting there all day long waiting for a launch and not get one. So the early warning radar system is definitely needed to prosecute the OPBAT AOR.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you all very much.

I would like to get each of your reactions to what it is that we are trying to do as you are in the war, you are in the fight, and maybe just tell me whether you think that we are winning this war, and if you had a magic wand, give me, each of you, the three things that, from your perspective, we need to do different in order to win the war if, in fact, we are winning the war.

Commander Brooks.

Commander BROOKS. Mr. Chairman, I think the fight continues. It is a fight we take very seriously and very earnestly. We hit it very, very hard in the zones with boardings and efforts.

Things that are frustrating for us: We need continued work with intelligence. This is my third ship in the Caribbean doing this work. Intelligence has improved dramatically, but we still spend a lot of time chasing wild geese because intelligence is not perfect. More work is needed there.

I think we do need more detection and monitoring assets. It is hard to see these things. Especially with an increasingly sophisticated opponent with low-profile, fine-glass, non-radar-reflective, hard-to-see-with-your-eye boats, better radars and sensors would help.

Once you get on board—another frustrating thing: When I was a youngster doing the law enforcement that the commandant was briefing you on, you knew 2 miles away that this guy had 40 tons of marijuana on him because you could smell him down wind. It wasn't hard once you found him.

Nowadays, it is very hard because this material is very easy to conceal. When you are dealing with a 400-foot freighter, it can be water pipe or fuel tank—God knows where. It takes us 2, 3, 4 hours to do these boardings, and still the chance of success is low. So things like the IONSCAN and the CINDI and the other modern detection abilities will help us once we get on board.

Last, I have seen great growth in interagency cooperative especially in GANTSEC and these other cooperative agreements with the other nations of the Caribbean. Continuing those initiatives will make our lives better, and it will make us much more effective in the theater.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you.

Lieutenant SANIAL. Mr. Chairman, I think we are definitely having success in the fight. There are certainly things we can do, but given the assets and capabilities of the assets we have down there, I think we are exceeding the capabilities, I know, of my ship and my people. I think they go above and beyond the call of duty every day. You can see it on their faces, the fatigue that can set in, but the elation we have when we get a drug bust more than makes up for it and keeps the fires burning and keeps them at it.

If I had a wish list for my ship, I think that would be a better radar, much better sensor capability. What I am trying to find is a boat that, the only way you are going to see it is if you hit it. I need a different frequency radar and fire control type radar.

I think if I had one or two more people on my ship, I could increase my ability to stay at sea longer before fatigue became a mission-limiting factor.

Finally, I think where I operate, if we could just get some more help, another ship or two or something like that down there, maybe get—instead of operating at 135 percent of the standard of my class, if I could get that down to 110 percent, that would be much better for my crew and people, and I think their morale would be better if they could just spend more time with their families.

Thank you, sir.

Mr. ZELIFF. We visited the Cutter *Mellon* while we were down there, and they just had, I believe, nine—if I remember correctly, $9 million worth of marijuana, and the excitement and the description of how that bust took place was—you know, left a very good impression on us from our point of view. They were really excited about the efforts and the results they had made, and so I certainly understand where you are coming from.

Lieutenant.

Lieutenant HORVATH. Sir, I think I could compare the drug war to sort of a marathon in a hilly country. There are parts when you are going uphill that are more difficult, but you are always one step closer to the end. That is how I see where we are right now.

In a sort of global sense, what I would like to see is increased emphasis on the international cooperation. We have been talking a lot about the end game, and we had a case recently where everything functioned perfectly. The coordination was ideal, radar-locking infrared picture. The target was followed down to the drop zone. The surface target came in to pick up the drop. The aircraft departed.

Unfortunately, the vessel departed as well, all while we were watching, effectively helplessly, because we didn't have the end game asset there. That is something that would help us out a lot, both obviously an accomplishment of the mission and the morale of the crews that are participating.

Locally speaking, we would always love to have more assets. The airplanes exist already. As Admiral Kramek mentioned, we would like to be able to operate them. We would also like to be a more effective asset with the satellite communications. I really can't emphasize enough what an addition this would be to our ability to coordinate and bring about the final resolution of an intercept.

Mr. ZELIFF. Two quick—while we are on it, you mentioned satellite communications capability. How much money are we talking about, or do you know? Is that an unfair——

Lieutenant HORVATH. No; that is a perfectly fair question. About $7 to $800,000.

Is that an accurate figure?

Mr. ZELIFF. Per unit—per plane?

Admiral KRAMEK. It is about $400,000. It is military SATCOM.

Mr. ZELIFF. Isn't that the one that Secretary Brown's plane needed as well?

Admiral KRAMEK. I can't answer that.

Mr. ZELIFF. My understanding was that that same capability was missing on that plane, but I could be wrong.

The only other quick question that I would ask is that we previously had 10 Falcons. My understanding is, we have now six operating in the seventh district. But I heard you say two?

Lieutenant HORVATH. We do have six operating at Air Station Miami. Four of those we have to keep in Miami for the obligations we have at home, which effectively leaves us two with which we can deploy.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you, Lieutenant.

Lieutenant GEBELE. I want to say I agree with everything that has been said here also. I think that down in the OPBAT AOR where I work primarily, the biggest problem is the Cuban geographic in the air defense identification zone right along Cuba. The bad guys can come up and drop the guys 10 miles off Cuba. We can watch them do it, and we can't go in there. That is our single biggest problem there.

If they do drop outside the defense identification zone of Cuba there, the problem is, I am in a helicopter, Kristi is in her Falcon. She is chasing the plane; he drops; she can't do anything to make him stop. She followed him back to Colombia. I am in a helicopter; he is in the boat. I watch him pick up all the bales. I can't use my helicopter as a weapon; and they take off. And if he has got longer legs than I do, I have to leave for gas, and we have no—usually no surface support over there. We have four helicopters, and that is it. There is no surface support. We just watched, videotaped, took flare still shots of everything that happened, and we get nothing, and that happens on an alarmingly high basis.

Mr. ZELIFF. You mentioned that that is affecting Cuba. Before we had some of these international cooperative agreements, that affected other countries as well, and so we made a lot of progress. We haven't made progress in Cuba.

Lieutenant GEBELE. Yes, sir.

Mr. ZELIFF. Mrs. Thurman.

Mrs. THURMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Just for the benefit of the panel and maybe my colleagues, this is not an unusual argument. In fact, this year, as you may know, in the defense authorization and appropriations we have heard a lot about readiness and quality of life, and that sounds very similar, the same issues that you bring before us. And if your wish list—I think it is an argument for all of us to remember, it is not just in one area but it is in many other areas as well.

Lieutenant Gebele, I have to say welcome since you live probably, oh, maybe 10 miles away from where my district begins in the Pasco County/Pinellas County line. And the one question that I certainly need to ask is, how much activity?

I know for a while we had some activity up on the west coast, and part of the district I have runs about nine counties—seven counties actually, up that west coast from Pasco all the way up to Dixie County.

Have we seen any activity or increased activity, or does it seem the activity on the west coast has died down at all? If you can answer that.

Lieutenant GEBELE. I can only tell you what I know from the past few years here; I can't speak globally how much is coming in. There has been some coming in. I know of two seizures in the last year. One was a sailboat, and one was a fishing boat, I believe.

There still is some coming around there. It is the path of least resistance. If we have Miami barred off, they are going to sneak around and come in the gulf side.

Mrs. THURMAN. That would probably be up in our district too, right?

Lieutenant GEBELE. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. THURMAN. I know for myself and I am sure for everyone, we appreciate the job you are doing and certainly appreciate the fact that you have been so candid with us as to the kind of activities you are participating in, and certainly not only what you are doing on interdiction but also a concern that all of us have had with the interdiction issue.

We appreciate you being here, and hopefully maybe we can help you with some of these issues that you have brought to us and make it a little bit easier for you. We thank you for being here.

Mr. ZELIFF. Mr. Souder from Indiana is very committed to this effort, and we will be doing a hearing out in Fort Wayne, I believe, sometime in June.

Mr. SOUDER. Yes, and I apologize for not being here earlier. I had to chair another hearing on another subcommittee and couldn't make it over because of that.

First, I want to personally thank you on behalf of the Nation, but also the kids and families in our district, for putting your lives on the line and making sacrifices so we can have less drugs in Indiana, and try to patrol it, because it may seem that you can't get everything and can get frustrated at times. Merely by reducing it, you help us, and we thank you for that.

A lot of times you don't get saluted when you are out there battling away. We do that on behalf of all of us in all of our States, but I in particular for Indiana.

I want to ask Lieutenant Horvath a couple of different things. We have heard a lot in the Central and South America panel that we just did about the importance of different radars and the changes in the radars in your areas. What safety considerations when you are in the air are affected by the lack of radar?

Lieutenant HORVATH. Our radar is actually quite capable. It is the F–16 intercept radar, and it is an excellent tool for us to be able to effect an intercept. And basically by way of explanation, what we do is, we are launched initially by our controlling authority. We literally run out to the airplane, start it up, take off, and hopefully we are handed off to an airborne early warning asset, the E–2 or the AWACS.

They will provide us a vector until we can lock up the target on radar ourselves, and then we will basically coordinate intercept to remain covert, come up behind the airplane. Provided it's daylight, we can close in close enough for a tail number ID, pass that to the controlling agency and then back off and continue tracking. So that's basically the scenario.

Our sensor equipment is very good, the radar and forward-looking infrared. And the handicap that I was speaking of is in communications, because in order to initially get a vector to the target, we will frequently go back and forth several times on the radio trying to copy the full information. And it can be—it can be pretty time-consuming and pretty distracting.

Once we have gotten that, passing that information that we have acquired back is also a concern.

Mr. SOUDER. Are there not gaps in this system by the changes we have done in policy areas?

Do you have sufficient AWACS information coming in? Because we know that some of them have been transferred at different times. Or do you feel you are sufficiently covered?

Lieutenant HORVATH. No, I don't. When we were operating in Green Clover, we found that the occasions when we were able to get that dome support almost always resulted in a launch and a track. And when we did not have the dome support, which unfortunately was far more often than not, we had much less success. And we were talking about interagency cooperation before.

The—when the domes would be coming down to transit, we would ask them to, well, while you are out there, while you are just doing this logistics flight, can you take a look through the area? And they would do that, and that to me is really maximizing what assets you have. It was only passing through the area, but we weren't going to let it go without taxing it for a little while.

Mr. SOUDER. In addition to helping with the actual interdiction, does it put you more at risk not to have that additional help?

Lieutenant HORVATH. The—without having the dome?

Mr. SOUDER. Yes.

Lieutenant HORVATH. It is——

Mr. SOUDER. Do you do things differently? Do you gamble more trying to make the interdiction knowing you don't have the other?

Lieutenant HORVATH. We always have to keep safety of flight as our primary goal. And what I would say is that with—we will continue to hold safety of flight in that high position. So holding that then makes it more difficult to do the mission, because you would be required to do more without the dome support. But we just won't go there.

Mr. SOUDER. Thank you.

Lieutenant Sanial, what—as a practical matter, what are your biggest needs? What would you need the most——

Lieutenant SANIAL. The——

Mr. SOUDER [continuing]. To be more effective in the interdiction?

Lieutenant SANIAL. I think just better sensor equipment because what—the threat that I am experiencing near Puerto Rico, the maritime threat, is they are small vessels, typically painted dark blue, with long shaft outboards that throw almost no wake, and I—I can't find them on my own with the sensors I have unless I get extremely close and the odds of that are just poor.

So if I had a better radar that could expand the window that I can effectively cover, I think that would increase my effectiveness.

Mr. SOUDER. We have put, I think, $71 million more than the President's request for those sensors. You have kind of hinted at what a sensor is. Could you explain to me exactly how that—what that is and how it would benefit you?

Lieutenant SANIAL. Well, a sensor is, you know, just how you can detect what you are looking for or when you are on patrol. Another example of a sensor would be like night-vision goggles. We—as a sidelight, we prototyped a next-generation of night-vision goggles, the kind that the pilots use in the cockpit on a patrol, and we used them for 2 days and made 2 drug seizures in close to shore; one in Saint Johns and one close to Puerto Rico, smaller seizures. But with those goggles, they created much greater detection capabilities than we had. We were able to do more ingenious things close to shore, use a small boat, put the goggles in the boat with a boarding team and have them just go explore.

They were able to pick a target of interest up and they chased it down, boarded it and made drug seizures two times. And so, you know, with the radar and better night-imaging equipment on the ship I think we could be more—we could be more—I think our level of confidence in the area that we are patrolling, having—how well we would feel that we had thoroughly covered and searched an area would increase drastically.

Mr. SOUDER. Once again, thank you for coming and thank you for your service.

Lieutenant SANIAL. Thank you, sir.

Mr. ZELIFF. Mr. Cummings, I know you and I have talked about perhaps doing a hearing up in Baltimore and maybe combining one with——

Mr. CUMMINGS. Yes.

Mr. ZELIFF [continuing]. Maybe you and Mr. Ehrlich.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Yes.

Mr. ZELIFF. I know how important this issue is to you.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Thank you.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

One of the—I was just sitting here listening to you all and until the last—a few of the last questions, I had not heard any mention of danger. I take it that these missions can be quite dangerous?

Anybody?

Lieutenant HORVATH. Yes, absolutely.

Commander BROOKS. Yes, sir. One of the most hazardous things we do is just launch and recover our boat and try to get our boarding teams on someone else. In any sort of sea state, it's very difficult and in significant weather it's almost impossible. That's a very high-risk thing. Ship/helo operations, by definition, are high risk.

With pitch and roll and trying to land a helicopter on a small flight deck, especially at night, is a thrill. Taking a ship with all of this flammable liquid and ordnance to sea in a very hostile environment just by nature, the ocean is by definition a hostile place, and to effectively keep everyone focused, everyone safe, to do these missions, it's a challenge.

Mr. CUMMINGS. I think at least one or two of you all mentioned boarding a ship and doing the search. Do you find folks on these ships have guns? I mean, I'm just curious.

Commander BROOKS. Yes, sir. It——

Mr. CUMMINGS. It seems that they would.

Commander BROOKS. Many of them have guns. It's rare for them to point them at us or use them at us, for a number of practical reasons. Generally, they can't outrun us and they can't outgun us once we are there, so where are they going to hide? Where are they going to run? But it's a constant hazard.

Our first concern is are there weapons on board and securing the weapons. And the initial sweep is for safety of the boarding party. We want to make sure we have got a good environment where the boarding party doesn't get hurt and the people on the boat don't get hurt. We don't want to make any mistakes, you know. So those are constant concerns.

Mr. CUMMINGS. The—it seems—I mean, as I listened to your testimony, I guess, I could summarize it in my—I mean, I have summarized it myself, is that here you are out there fighting on the front line and you want to be effective and you want to make sure whatever you do is cost efficient. Is that a pretty good summary?

Commander BROOKS. Yes, sir.

Lieutenant SANIAL. Yes, sir.

Mr. CUMMINGS. You just want to be effective and want to make sure the money that the Government spends is spent cost efficiently.

I want to—I would like to take a moment to thank you on behalf of the citizens of this country and my district for what you are doing. It's—this has been very—I have only been here for a month but this has been probably one of the most meaningful hearings I have participated in, to know what you are doing. See, I see the end result of it every day. And I want to thank you all for what you are doing.

And we have to be supportive of you, to the maximum degree, because if we send people off to war we expect them to be well equipped to do their job. And this is a war, too, and you have to be to be equipped to do your job.

Thank you very much.

Commander BROOKS. Thank you, sir.

Mr. ZELIFF. Thank you.

I would like to, in closing up this hearing, talk about how much I enjoyed—I was up in one of those Falcon jets and we were on those helos, and we were on the cutters, and the tremendous respect that we have for the daily work that you all do. I have a son that's in the Marine Corps and I can see through his perspective as well, and we are very fortunate to have the military that we do have.

This is a war, in my book, and I am going to do everything I can. Now that I am leaving the Congress, I don't want to leave without getting this commitment wrapped up. We are committed to giving the funds and—not only in the supplemental but in the 1997 budget process.

We are going to do it a little differently. We have a major commitment from the Speaker on down and we are going to get to where we have to go. So there are a lot of players in this partnership.

I was in a school Monday afternoon, drug-free schools, and that's an area that we are trying to evaluate in terms of accountability. Are we getting bang for the buck? In some programs, in drug-free schools, we are; in some we are not. In this particular one, we are.

I was amazed to see parental involvement, and that's good. We are in Bolivia, Colombia, Peru, Panama, Mexico. We are starting to see some changes. We are starting to see some advantages of interagency cooperation, far better than it was before; and countries involved in some of these agreements, far better than where we were before.

I can remember some GAO reports saying that the source country programs were mismanaged and weren't working. Well, I can certainly say that with an open mind, I went down there and visiting each of those countries with each of those Ambassadors, that we saw signs that it was working.

In your area, we see changing challenges of going toward interdiction. And some of the things we did in 1992, 1993, and 1994 have to be changed based on the mission change.

So we are here to try to put all of this thing together, and I think, again, as we said earlier, Admiral Kramek has done a tremendous job in trying to keep it all together, in an era of diminished resources. And I think that's the problem we are dealing with.

For us to carve out $15.1 billion of those diminished resources and put priorities on the drug war, we need to convince some skeptical people on both sides of the aisle that there's a good return on investment and we are dealing with our kids and our future. To me, that is the most important thing that we could possibly do here.

So with whatever message that you can take back to the troops that you work with and command, please give them our thanks for their efforts on our behalf or our country's behalf, and I just hope that we can win the war on drugs.

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I hope that we can, as we did in 1960, put a man on the Moon, I hope that we can win the war on drugs. It may be 10 or 15 years, but we need to be committed to the process.

Thank you again for being here, and this hearing stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:05 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

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